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No. 150. APR/MAY 2002

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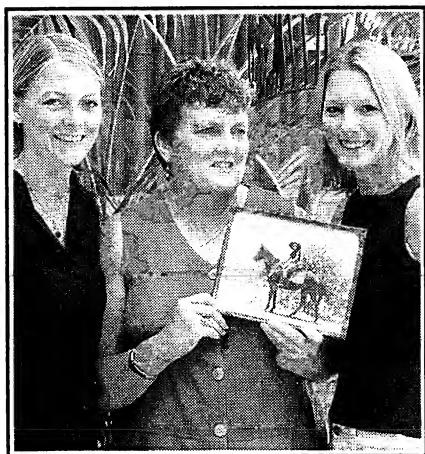
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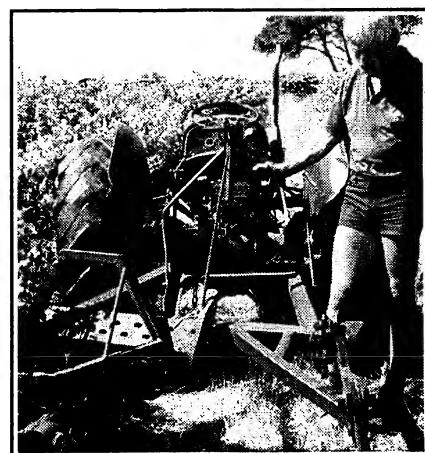
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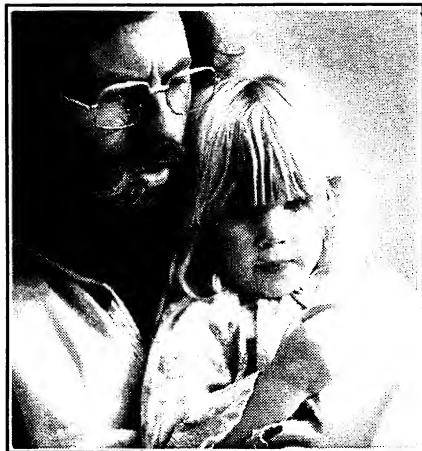
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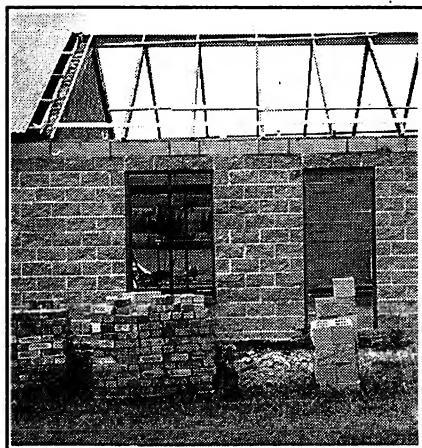
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## COVER PHOTOS

**Front Cover:** Young GR fans Clare, Ken and Anna help us celebrate a milestone issue. Despite a changing world and many changes to the appearance of the magazine, basic values of friendship, caring and pursuit of a healthy lifestyle remain constant. Photo by Marcel Aucar.

**Back Cover:** Put faces to the names of the GR team – Megg and Sally in front; Noreen, Mary, David, Sue, Suni and Sabrina at the back (left to right). We're thrilled to bring you our 150th issue and we thank you for your support.

Edited by Megg Miller and Mary Horsfall.

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It's a remarkable achievement for any publication to reach the milestone of 150 issues, especially a small special interest magazine. And to point out that it represents 29 years of hard slog adds extra significance to this feat. Not surprisingly, I often wryly comment, 'I've given *Grass Roots* the best years of my life'.

In reality, I've been just one cornerstone of the magazine's existence, as have the amazing team of people who have stressed and cared alongside me and put an extra effort in around each deadline. All contributed in a unique way and their names crop up still during morning tea discussions when past activities and amazing incidents are recalled.

Our current team are no exception – Mary does a brilliant job editing, as does Sally with the proofing. Sabrina not only sets all the GR pages on the computer but has set about organising me as well. Sue manages a range of roles from typist to advertising coordinator to switchboard operator, plus others both obvious and obscure and all with unfailing good humour. Noreen packs off orders, Suni advises while simultaneously editing books we're soon to publish and David has the knack for sorting out our computer problems. David is renowned for his disappearances, slipping out to do jobs and returning just as a crisis abates or we sweatily unload the last of a big delivery. A more diverse group you couldn't find, yet we manage to rub along successfully and enjoy getting the work done.

As important as our efforts are they fade against the contribution of readers. *Grass Roots* stands alone in its presentation of readers' thoughts and experiences. Rarely do you find a publication not written by professionals, but in GR we seek stories of personal experience and this not only makes the magazine more interesting but the content is chock-a-block with tried and tested advice. Whether you're 8 or 80 you can get your viewpoint across or share the secrets of gardening, keeping a cow or living healthily on our pages. Contributions often generate fan mail and even attract heaps of junk letters.

We're immensely proud that readers contact each other and network. Many friendships have been established and we

know that it's not only resources that are exchanged but consolation and care, both in short supply in the current busy world. Our readers, we know, are our greatest asset. Not only do you inspire us with stories of ingenuity and courage, of joy and happiness, but push us to present a publication that meets a multiplicity of needs. The compliments, 'It's a good read', and, 'There's always new things to learn', are music to our ears. We know we're doing some things right.

From time to time we receive notes to the contrary. They demand to know why we've changed, why we're scraping the bottom of the barrel, why we've mellowed or avoided controversial issues. Such accusations are passionately put forward, though, funny enough, not many have the grit to put their name on their grumble. Have we really changed all that much? Considering close on 30 years have passed since our original launch it's inevitable some development, some refocusing or shift in perspective will occur. And, as we say very frequently, a magazine largely written by readers reflects their values and view of life.

Preparing this issue, we've all slipped out into the storeroom and thumbed through dozens of back copies. We've discovered articles we had forgotten existed, reconnected with old friends who contributed to early issues, critically examined old articles for signs of improved authorship and enjoyed the obvious time warp between the '70s magazines and those of today. Had we changed? The answer is both yes and no.

Our appearance has reflected the improvements in publishing technology and natural evolution of style. Photographs are better quality today and can be more easily 'improved' than in the past. Our content now has fewer 'how-to' articles and less material reprinted from Department of Agriculture or Primary Industries sources. A greater proportion of articles now have bylines, but there is a possibility some writers' bylines in the past slipped off with handling under the heat and lights during preparation of negatives prior to plate making. Today we would blame the computer, and have more last-minute opportunities to proof and check before final setting or prepar-

ing to send the page digitally.

There is a greater presence of people today. Flick through your recent GRs and the pages vibrate with people describing their lifestyle, where they travelled, how they manage gardens or livestock, and even, of course, organising getting married. We reached consensus over the unchanging picture people painted of their dreams of their space in the country and freedom to follow their heart, of their belief in good healthy food and the joys of producing it, of hope in alternative modalities for restoring mind and body, and in the open warmth and generosity readers extended to each other. Our sense of family goes back a long way. We've changed, adapted and grown, we've passed the simple how-to-do-it phase in lots of areas and covered the same topics, but from different viewpoints or using different methods or equipment. Our investigations, our time spent languidly turning pages and marvelling over memories, brought forth more similarities than anticipated. Values, good old-fashioned values, don't change, and they have been the core of readers' letters and stories since 1973.

It's been tremendous fun for us all planning and putting together this special issue. We're honoured to have a diverse range of readers' personal vignettes about what *Grass Roots* means to them, and to share stories about second, third and even fifth generation readers. Well, that's stretching things a little, I know, but the baby loves lying all over the pages of GR. You'll also enjoy interesting overviews from Mary, Sally and Suni. I have to admit that during the reminiscences and kidding about old photos and past ways I've been swamped with moments of immense sadness for people no longer with us. Many wonderful, vigorous, talented people have gone on to where people go or have slipped into senility. It's a compliment to the richness of GR culture that we're able to recognise the void left by these special people and to wish they were able to celebrate alongside us. We hope you enjoy this 150th issue and the glimpses of the past it presents. Thank you readers and writers, this is as much your celebration as it is ours. Let's raise a glass to friends and family. ♣

# Looking At Pages From The Past

by Megg Miller, Nagambie, Vic.

'What are you doing with all those magazines in your bag?' Suni asked in an accusing tone recently, thinking perhaps I'd lost my marbles and was shoplifting. What indeed was I doing with dozens of old magazines? Boning up on the way we were.

A chance comment from a reader saying how fascinating the early advertisements were set me thinking; wouldn't it be fun to randomly select a range of magazines and check out what readers were into. To do this really well, and I mean with a proper attention to detail, would take months, and, as much as I'd like to languish and read all day, there are stories to write and deadlines to meet. Pity! So over a few late nights, and assisted by endless cups of coffee, I've rediscovered fascinating facts and figures that no doubt were representative of alternative life some 10 or 20 years ago. Settle back in your hammock or armchair, I'm going to take you on a guided tour of early *Grass Roots* and introduce you to amazing people, outrageous ideas and products and let you absorb – in silence – the price being asked for land or community shares. We'll peep at Feedback in passing and just generally embrace the 'gosh' factor that has always characterised GR.

We have to start with GR 18 because this is when we moved from a

quarterly – an irregular one at that – to being taken on board by Gordon and Gotch for Australia-wide distribution. 'You've gotta go bi-monthly,' they advised, and publishing as a leisurely activity ceased. It's been a treadmill, albeit an exciting one, ever since.

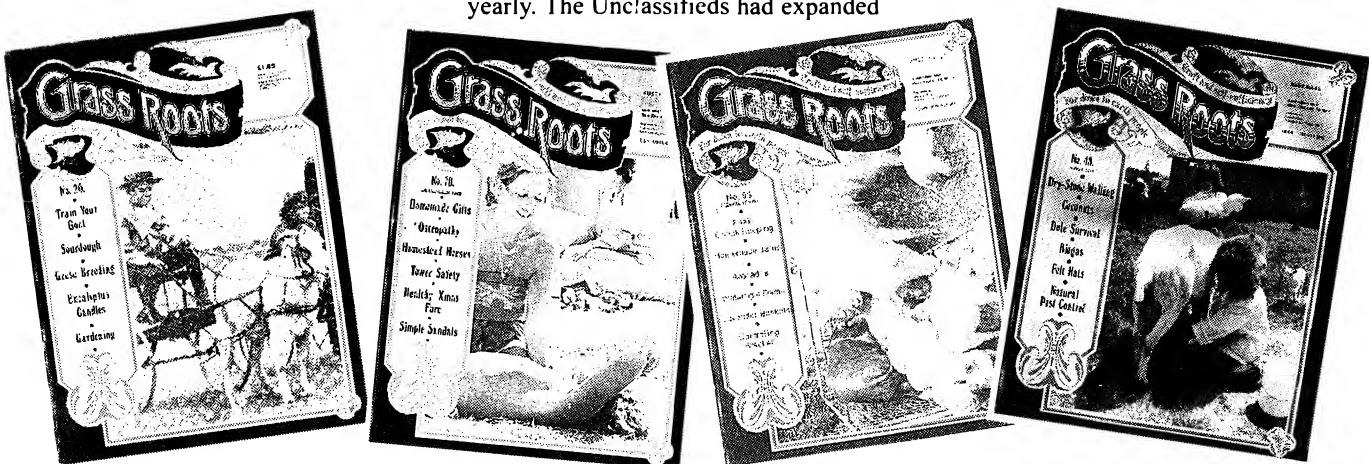
Up until that issue – Winter 1979 – a yearly subscription had cost \$8. *Zirius*, a funky New Age newspaper was promoted at the time for \$6 a yearly sub and the WA Permaculture Association were offering membership at \$5 a year. The Ashford spinning wheel, one of the few wheels available then, was advertised for \$86, and New Gippsland offered packets of vegie seeds at 50 cents each. The Unclassifieds – just half a dozen – listed working bullocks for sale, a bush block of 21 acres in south Queensland for \$8500, and carried a request for the first five issues of GR – 'would pay well'. The Queensland oven was both cover picture and feature story, but you could pick up tips on raspberries, figs, goats, bees, no-dig gardening, solar hot water, and learn feather preparation for filling quilts from Renate.

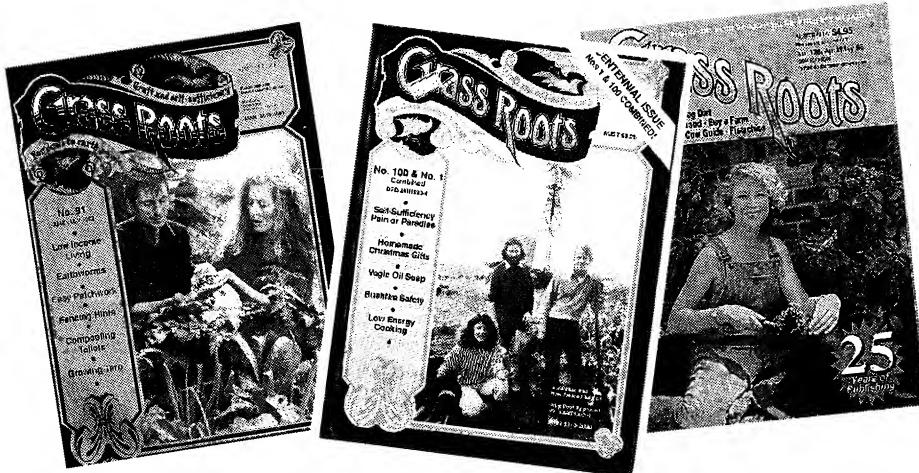
Just 30 months later when GR 28 was published, our subscription had jumped to \$16 (you got two additional magazines), with other groups advertising membership for the *F and T Journal* or to join the Rare Fruit Council at \$10 yearly. The Unclassifieds had expanded



to over three pages, largely land transactions of one sort or the other. A nine-acre flock, no dwelling, in central Victoria could be rented for \$4 weekly and 60 acres of forested country near Gympie asked \$22,000. In Land Lines, 25 acres of bushland just out of Hobart was there for someone to use, provided they paid the rates and taxes for the busy owners. Poultry and craft featured prominently in this issue, a macrame baby bouncer swing was the height of fashion. Feedback stretched over 22 pages (!!) and featured the delightful drawings of Ian Gunn with his GR couple Rosemary and Basil. Readers sought caretakers, home school teachers, and even a midwife for delivery in an isolated, powerless hut at the foothills of the Snowy Mountains. Yurts – just \$4500 each – had appeared in a Canberra backyard and we all wanted one, and Down to Earth Co-op were promoting their summer Confest. Other stories concerned bushfire, dowsing, wind power and garden projects.

Skipping over to GR 39 (Oct 1983), our lead story was from Marilyn and Howard King, outlining the nightmare existence they lived as a result of the family's allergies, all due to exposure to spray drift. This thick issue, 98 pages, took ages to get through; 20 pages Feedback, 10 pages Classifieds, as they





were now known, plus a pullout mail order catalogue of all the books you've ever wanted to read. Our range of display ads had grown and covered cooperative games, folk-wear clothing, horse-drawn vehicles, handmade footwear, along with alternative technology and craft services and tools.

To celebrate our fiftieth issue, we printed a bumper 106-page magazine with the Miller family, rurally attired, on the cover. Readers joined in with 'where are they now' stories; one, Robyn Eades, being part of the 150th celebration. Our *Fireside Reader* had just been released and lots of the articles this issue were oriented towards cold weather – designing a jumper, making moccasins, spinning wheel care, and gardening tips for cold areas. You could also learn about biogas, cheap hot water and lunar fertility control. An article on growing coffee came from Michel Fanton, who, with partner Jude, later set up the Seed Savers Network. Iriss Quigley, an awesome oldie, who wrote to GR for years, sent the poem, 'Didn't Need Tranquillisers', for Feedback. It aptly summed up the hectic GR life most of us managed. Now we had 'Grassifieds' not classifieds and the easy-to-use format we still follow. The Contacts were a new feature, but property for sale and community shares were the main attractions. For \$26,000 you could get 106 acres at Tabulam or a 40-acre bush block in Gippsland. Unisex calico trousers were advertised for \$14 posted and a 10-foot wind tower was offered in exchange for two or three solar panels. And a subscription to GR? Just \$18 yearly.

By GR 67, published in June 1988, we'd gone back to 82 pages of text and the Feedback had been reduced to 10 – 12 pages. Smaller type rather than lack of material accounted for this reduc-

tion. Readers asked for advice on finding land, for alternative remedies, help with DIY problems and one special letter thanked us all because GR had brought two very happy people together. Home builders had access to second-hand materials, chip heaters, a kero fridge and, if they tired of all the work involved, \$4000 would buy a converted 30-foot Bedford bus. Bush blocks were still going cheap, 64 acres near Nymboida for \$18,000 and 30 acres at Tara for \$15,000. Developed properties were considerably dearer, 80 acres near Maclean offered for \$69,000 and a pole frame house on 43 acres at Gympie listed at \$130,000. Display advertisements offered homemade shingles, soya bean coffee, New Age music, fibreglass brick and paver moulds, a digital rain gauge and hot drums. Our feature story was contributed by Iriss Quigley, who had not long turned 80. You could also read about horses, mudbricks, concrete tanks, generators, rag rugs, or relax with aromatherapy.

Our August 1990 issue was GR 80, and boasted lots of DIY projects and crafts and hearty fare to keep mind and body together. The city slicker was on our mind, and help proffered on buying a farm, keeping sheep in the suburbs, kitting out the dog, and studying self-sufficiency. Lonely hearts beat loudly – there were nearly four pages of irresistible sounding singles – while property sales had slipped to less than two pages. A town block one hour from Adelaide was on offer for \$9500, urgent sale, while half an acre of land with caravan in a country town in NSW was priced at \$50,000.

We reached 100 issues at the end of 1993. How good is that! To mark this auspicious event, plus the fact that it represented around 20 years of pen pushing,

we reprinted the first issue and enclosed it in the middle pages as a souvenir issue. The cover picture was a reprint of our friends from GR 1, and it seemed an irony that one of the story highlights was 'Self-Sufficiency – Pain or Paradise'. Both, most readers would cry! An article on 'Adapting to Change', from Liz Zylinski, outlined a move from suburbia to rural living. Liz graciously joined us in one of the celebration overviews this issue. Peter Carr was also represented with a story about the 'Self-Sufficient Sexagenarian' and has written for the 150th issue also. Because it was a Dec/Jan issue, lots of the stories reflect gift making and giving and holiday activities. Other stories included, 'The Serpent In Paradise' and bushfire advice. It was a fun issue, rich with reminiscing and sharing special times. We were asked to run a photo and description of a young man missing for several years, and, like the Mounties, found our man. Our network never sleeps!

Space constraints prevent peeking at further issues but it's also appropriate to pause at the 100th. There will be time in the future to look at the issues from 101 to 149. What did I miss or intend to discuss? Well, I totally overlooked the electroped, a natty imported petrol engine we advertised in GR 20. You attached it to your bicycle and woosh! There wasn't room to mention GR 83, which came back from the printers with the cover photos reversed. Not only that, the piggies intended for the back cover were now sideways, not upright, on the front. Help! That almost elicited a nervy. Actually I was having one. My Dad was dying and Suni, I recall, took off to America for a year's exchange that very week. Not a cover easily forgotten.

Each issue is worthy of a comment, or a closer look. They're mildly amusing because of changing styles, I mean, all the fluffy hair and floral shirts – did we really look like that? They're also , invaluable references.

I can't believe the amount of material we've featured or the topics covered, it's phenomenal. We've been a good team – your experiences and our publishing expertise. Take time to flick through some back issues, to recall forgotten names, smile at our naivety, feel saddened by time rushing by. Lose yourself awhile. Thanks for being part of our history, we look to share future issues with you. ¶

# GRASS ROOTS in the GENES

150th  
Celebration

We thought it would be fun to do a feature on second-generation GR families; after nearly 30 years of publication and 150 issues we were sure there would be a few around. To our surprise we heard about third, fourth, and even fifth generations of GR fans – though the fifth generation was still at the stage of 'rolling on it'. We can only wonder with Pam Cole: "Does GR get into the genes, or what?"



## GR IS A GREAT FRIEND

I would like to claim not only a second, but a third generation of *Grass Roots* in my family. My two daughters make a second generation and now three grandchildren make a third, through the ideas being used for their benefit, including recipes and advice on child rearing. Tom, who is two years old, loves gardening and thinks the back cover of GR 145 is great – chooks are just after tractors in his life's interests at the moment.

We always keep our old copies of the magazine, not like other mags that are thrown out. If you want to know something, look it up in *Grass Roots*. It's a great friend with a family feel that has continued over the years. The articles of most interest to me are those about people. I've enjoyed reading the Contact ads and trying recipes. Even the advertising is of benefit to our lifestyle, we've found items through GR ads that are not generally available.

Heather Marchingo

## GR IS SO SOOTHING

My father has been reading GR for as long as I can remember and he still has a bookshelf full of past editions. When I was younger I used to flick through them and was quite fascinated at all the gentle farming techniques. I have been an earth child since I was a little girl and found GR to be so relatable. I am now 23 and every time I go into my local newsagency I have to check whether I have the latest GR.

The magazine has a wonderful balance of inspiring soul stories and practical ways to solve problems, all seeming so easy. In this crazy world of chaos and greed and disposable things I find GR so soothing. One day I also will have my own little block of land with my chooks and solar power, vegie gardens and environmentally friendly loo.

There are many things I want to do in this lifetime, however, living a self-sufficient lifestyle would be the most rewarding. As hard and challenging as it might be, I'm more than willing to give it a go.

Suzie Horton



## MUM BOUGHT FIRST EDITION

I am a second-generation reader, aged 50. My mum bought the very first edition and continued buying the mag until her death 19 years ago. My girls are now 23 and 25 and read GR every so often. Both live in suburbia, but one day . . .

I have loved each and every edition, rejoiced, commiserated, agreed, 'yes, that's me – now, previously, in the future'. And yet this is my first letter!

My mum finally managed to get her 15 acres, home, chickens, cats and dogs, gardens established less than two years prior to her death at 54 from cancer.

I was not able to consider a move 'to the bush' with my then husband – he loved certain aspects, but we never did achieve anything other than a suburban contribution: vegie gardening, recycling, chooks and ducks, and sheep (for a short period), plus raising sick and orphaned animals. The vegie garden gave way as the trees grew taller. It was more important to keep the trees to feed the wildlife – we could revert to the markets, they couldn't.

I became associated with shareholders at Nimbin Rocks Cooperative about 15 years ago and rekindled the flame to a higher intensity. My husband became my ex, my new partner also became involved in the Co-op where we have been shareholders for the last three years. The shed site is cleared, revegetation started, second-hand building materials are being collected. Now we are planning the house, the dam and income production.

It has been great to keep track of contributors over the years – Roberino, Pam, Jose, Iriss, Pat etc. Sad to hear of Vicki Judd's recent loss, so many ripples in a pond from Megg's writing in 'Gumnut Gossip'.

**Karen Welsh**



#### **SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN SUBURBIA**

Barry and I began reading *Grass Roots* in the '80s when our girls were teenagers. We have never stopped practising self-sufficiency skills in suburbia – recycling, composting, growing vegies. We have some acres at Tyalgum where we intended to move in our retirement and build in mud-brick. Now in our late 50s, we are reassessing our physical capabilities.

One daughter, Kamala, is now an occasional reader. Our other daughter, Belinda, is a regular avid reader, usually of our copy when she is here visiting, or else she buys her own. There's always a race to the mail on GR day! Belinda recently moved to a house in Lismore. Within a week she had a compost bin up and running and a vegie garden marked out, before she'd made a start on unpacking her belongings. She is just about to begin a degree in Environmental Science at Southern Cross University, Lismore.

**Janet Cox**



#### **HIPPIE NONSENSE**

In our case we came across GR in its earliest days, when it was spoken of by many as 'some sort of hippie nonsense'. We had four small children and although teaching jobs bound us to town life, at least they were country towns. We grew our vegies and fruit, composted, kept chooks when the rules allowed (and sometimes when they didn't), spun/knitted/crocheted wool, made our own things, mended and made do before it was called recycling, made jams and syrups and plum wine, bottled and froze produce, restored lovely old furniture and machinery; read, reread and stored up copies of GR. All this was absorbed through the children's pores in some magical way. It became quite a battle to see who got to read *Grass Roots* first.

As a result, our eldest pursues many crafts, from patchwork to woodwork, and a career in horticulture. Her brother restores old houses to their simple beauty, with lush gardens to match. The next one has created beautiful and fruitful gardens from nothing on tiny city blocks, organised community produce gardens, worked in native nurseries and wildlife havens. The fourth shares with his wife a keen interest in permaculture, composting and sheet mulching, recycles greywater for garden use, extols the virtues of a newly installed Enviroloo, and they are creating a bush home using many natural or preloved materials. All four are happiest in quiet bush surroundings and care

for animals, ranging from ducks to dogs. Does GR get into the genes, or what?

**Pam Cole**

#### **TWIN FANS**

I am writing on behalf of my brother Danny and myself. We just love your mag because if it was not for you we wouldn't have the eight excellent penpals we have now. Our penpals live all over Australia. We love to read what animals they have and how they are doing. I also love the Kids Page. My brother and I like to have competitions on who can solve the puzzles first. We like crafts too, but sometimes we don't have the right materials, and we also like the cooking.

**Danny & Jordan Anderson**

#### **FOURTH GENERATION**

My mum used to enjoy reading *Grass Roots*, but now she is in the local hostel with Alzheimer's. She still picked up *Grass Roots* and had a read when she was visiting me recently. I have enjoyed it from the beginning and so has my brother. My daughter Rosemary and her husband Clive read it and Rosemary has had a couple of letters published over the years. I would not be surprised if Rosemary's children don't also read the magazine, so there would be four generations of us who enjoy the magazine. Rosemary and Clive lost all their magazines in the Nyngan flood years ago and had to start their collection over again.

**Ruth Robertson**



## THE FIFTH GENERATION

I was really rocked by the realisation that not only was I part of a second generation, but in fact my daughter Zoe, granddaughter Jasmin, and now great-granddaughter Taylor-Lee (five months old at time of writing), who enjoys rolling on it, are all hooked on *Grass Roots*. I've always been most interested in the Feedback letters and in reading about the land and being careful with resources. It's nice, too, to read about other people, even when they are doing it tough, they are complete personalities. Over the years I've tried food recipes, ointments and tonics and I've knitted ponchos, socks and blankets from patterns in the mag. Zoe is interested in chooks and uses GR as a source of information.

**Carol-Anne Hodson**

## SHARING IDEAS AND SEEDS

How about a third generation too? I started reading GR when I still lived at home because my mother, Rhonda, subscribed. I have now inherited all Rhonda's back copies. I am 37, my 14-year-old son, Ben, also reads it. He likes to read the penpals and he did read the Kids Page when he was younger. He is interested in chooks and reads GR after I've finished with it.

I like the articles on home construction, and growing and using vegies. There is a wealth of information on how to find out about things. I'm involved in correspondence, sharing ideas and seeds. I see people at field days whom I have got to know through GR.

Rhonda has enjoyed Pat Coleby's goat articles and Maurice Finkel's natural health articles, also craft and chook articles. Over the years there hasn't been anything much that she hasn't enjoyed reading for the down-to-earth information.

**Nerida Finnigan**

## GOOD LIFE ON LOW INCOME

I was brought up in a wealthy and privileged way, never hearing the words 'save, recycle, produce, do-it-yourself, self-sufficient, grow, make-do, budget'. Then, nearly 19 years ago, I found myself with very little money and the sole parent of a small boy.

I discovered *Grass Roots* magazines in the library and found it good reading, soon realising I had missed out on a lot. As the years went by I copied interesting articles and put a few ideas from the mag into practice. Then another man entered my life. A few years later he was taken out of our lives when I was three months pregnant. I was a sole parent again, shifted out bush and attempted to live a self-sufficient life. I tried fishing, poultry rearing, animal breeding, herb and vegie growing.

After two years I craved the city life and company so we shifted to the bottom of the Gold Coast where we have lived for five years now. We live simply, love nature and natural things, look after the environment, don't rely on money but do it ourselves when we can, recycle, trade, budget, barter, and keep on educating ourselves. Just about opposite to the norm for this part of the world most of the time.

We travel a lot so all the boys have been home-schooled at certain times and we have studied permaculture during home-schooling times. We never go to a hairdresser as we clip and shave our own hair. We make decorations and presents from suggestions in the mag. We have used solar power. We use public transport when we can. All this self-sufficiency has enabled us to be able to afford a two-bedroom unit on the beach and a good GR lifestyle on a low income for many years.

**Charmaine Anderson & Family**



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# MEMORABLE MEALS WITH HERBS

by Loma Thompson, Currajong, Qld.

We live in suburban Townsville beside a lake which flooded during Cyclone Justin, inundating my garden. Fortunately, most of our garden beds are well raised up so we didn't lose much. Our garden is a rainforest of fruit and native trees, but we do leave space to grow our winter vegies. We grow mango, macadamia nut, all the citrus including tangelo, black sapote, canistel, jakfruit, passionfruit, guava, Brazilian cherry, avocado and plantain bananas.

I became interested in herbs over 20 years ago when I was working full time and felt I needed an outdoor hobby. Up until then all I had grown was mint, parsley and shallots, and didn't know a lot about herbs. I remember reading an article in an ancient *Women's Weekly* which described and pictured the Hemphills' garden at Dural and I made a point of visiting it. This started me off buying herb books, hoping I could grow all the lovely plants therein. Alas, I soon found out that tropical North Queensland was not kind to the sweet-smelling herbs of the temperate climes, and those which are considered perennial in the south become annuals here.

My interest was greatly stimulated by a visit to the first International Herb Conference held in Invercargill, NZ. It really opened my eyes as to how herbs can be used in cooking, cosmetics, pot pourri, mustards, vinegars, crafts like paper making and rose petal beads, bread making, and homoeopathy. This interest continued to grow by attendance at further herb conferences in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Brisbane and the Blue Mountains where herb lovers gather to exchange ideas and information.

Having experimented with the traditional shapes of herb beds, I now grow mine in a higgledy-piggeldy fashion – amongst the vegetables, in baskets, some in pots that can be shifted around



Most culinary herbs are adaptable so if you haven't ground to sow them in, a large container like this will be perfect.

according to the weather, some as companion plants. The blue-grey ones – sage, rosemary, lavender and curry plant – are kept away from the watering system. All the basil thrive and last through the wet season.

Our herb society has planted and maintains a herb garden in the beautiful Queens Gardens. Among the traditional herbs, we grow many Asian ones which do well – arrowroot, turmeric, gingers, greater galangale and thorny coriander (*Erygium foetidum*), lemon grass, citronella and patchouli all thrive. Scented pelargoniums and lemon verbenas are doing well, as is the vanilla bean climbing up a frangipanni trunk.

Among the plants we can't grow are many of the lavenders – *Lavandula dentata* is the only one which will flower here – bergamot, elecampane, chamomile, savory, sweet woodruff, sweet Cicely and some roses.

However, we take heart that much of what we grow we can use and enjoy for most of the year.

## MEALTIME MAGIC

Fresh herbs can literally transform the most mundane of foods. Here are some of the ways you can enhance the flavour of your meals.

### Garlic Bread

Can be peped up considerably by adding chives, chervil and parsley to the garlic butter before spreading.

### Herb Toasts

1/2 cup butter  
1/2 tsp each of chopped basil, chives, thyme and marjoram

Heat all ingredients together and let stand for 30 minutes. Reheat gently and brush onto both sides of wholemeal bread. Brown lightly in a slow oven. Good with soups, salads or as a nibble.

### Mint/Five Spice Dip

bunch of mint (apple mint is nice)  
about 10 leaves of five spice  
100 g cream cheese  
25 g feta cheese  
Parmesan or Romano cheese  
juice of half a lime or lemon  
1 tbsp butter

2 tomatoes

Blend all together. This makes a dip, but if you wish to make it a spread, add twice as much cream cheese.

#### **Tomato Savoury**

1 lge ripe tomato

1 onion

1 tsp curry powder

1 tsp sugar

1 tsp grated cheese

1/2 tsp Vegemite

1 or 2 eggs

Cut up onion and tomato and boil until tender. Add other ingredients with egg added last. Season to taste.

#### **Herb Butters**

Herb butter is made by beating finely chopped herbs such as chervil, parsley, and lemon thyme into creamed butter, together with seasonings such as lemon, onion or garlic juice, mashed green peppercorns or salt and pepper. Shape the butter and store in the fridge. Use as a garnish for grilled meat or fish, for tossing with fresh young vegetables, or spread it on thin brown bread.

Herb butter can be made with many variations, but the basic method is to use butter that is firm and cool, not taken straight from the fridge. Pound the butter until smooth, add the chopped herbs and pound again until thoroughly mixed, then add seasonings and chill until ready to serve. Any of the following herbs make a piquant addition to a meat or fish dish when mixed with butter: basil and garlic, chives, mixed herbs, mint, parsley, sage, tarragon and parsley or shallots. But of course the herbs must be *fresh*.

#### **Eggs**

An ideal vehicle for herbs, their bland flavour and smooth consistency can be changed in a twinkling. Try a few leaves of lemon thyme when next you

have poached eggs. Use chives or tarragon with scrambled eggs. How about a garlic and parsley omelette, or one made with purslane or sorrel? Stuffed eggs are made by taking out the yolks of hard-boiled eggs, mashing them to a smooth paste with mayonnaise or sour cream, then adding chopped herbs and piling the mixture back into the halved white.

#### **Herbs To Go With Meat**

A good rule of thumb is:

- Beef or lamb, sprinkle rosemary over the joint.
- Veal, marinate with garlic, shallots, rosemary and bay in wine and oil.
- Pork, smear with mustard, insert sage into cuts in rind.
- Chicken, tarragon or fennel are great in stuffing.
- Meatballs with mint and parsley.

#### **Salads And Vinaigrette Dressings**

The basic dressing for a green salad is usually made with five parts of oil to one of vinegar, seasoned with lemon juice and pepper. Herb flavours can be added by substituting herb oils or herb vinegars, both of which are simply made and will transform a salad. Perhaps just add a few fresh herbs, pulped or finely chopped, to this dressing. Vary it by adding mustard, a pinch of sugar, a teaspoon of yoghurt, sour cream, or crumbled blue cheese.

If you are in a hurry, you can make a quick herb sauce with:

- 150 ml commercial mayonnaise
- 150 ml natural yoghurt
- 2 hard-boiled eggs
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- sea salt and black pepper
- 1 tbsp each of chopped dill, chives and parsley

Mix the mayonnaise and yoghurt together until smooth, mash the egg yolks with the mustard, mix together adding salt and pepper and stir in chopped herbs. Delicious with raw vegies or mixed salads.

#### **Rice**

Brown rice is delicious mixed with sautéed leeks and a tablespoon each of chopped dill, chives, parsley and basil.

#### **Frozen Vegetables**

These can pall when eaten regularly. Pep frozen or fresh vegetables up with these: mint with carrots, chervil with cauliflower, basil with kohlrabi, dill with mushrooms, dill seeds with cabbage, parsley with potato cakes, and

chives with zucchini.

#### **Beans**

These are much improved by herbs. Cannelloni beans, simmered very slowly with olive oil, water to just cover, and chopped sage, make a fabulous dish, hot or cold. Dried beans make a very nourishing meal, either hot with garlic and herb butter, or cold flavoured with a herb dressing, or a yoghurt and mint sauce.

#### **Green Pancakes with Cream Cheese**

Blend 120 g sorrel or spinach and add to the usual pancake recipe and allow to stand for a time. Mix up cream cheese, seasoning and chopped chives. Cook in frypan and put two tablespoons of cheese mixture on each one and roll up.

#### **Oils**

Decant some of your oil into a jar. Add basil, tarragon, thyme, marjoram, fennel or rosemary. Shake every day and remove the herb within a fortnight; the flavour will be in the oil.

#### **Asian Herbs**

There are many of these which grow well in Townsville – the basil, gingers, cabbages, water chestnuts, and, of course, the curry tree whose leaves make such a difference to curry.

So remember, do not tie the cordon bleu ribbon to herbs. For centuries they have belonged to the most basic of foods, not the most sophisticated. Think of them rather as a means of helping to vary and stretch simple food, as well as to create some memorable dishes.

Some of this article has been reprinted from a past issue of *Pot Pourri*, a publication of the Herb Society of North Queensland. For enquires regarding meetings and activities contact The Secretary, Helen Dyer, on: 07-4728-1416. ♀

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# Bugs Beware!

by Neville Jackson, Valhalla.



This article concerns itself with notes about our most obvious and useful assassins. Ones that hunt around the clock to ensure their, and our, survival. There are of course many other useful creatures than are listed here that exist on a well-managed organic property. Take a good look around your garden, make positive steps to encourage these foragers and they'll certainly look after all of us.

Rarely do we find damage to plants from insect attack. Our predator variety and numbers are so high that pests are a bad insurance risk.

Water is the most positive asset for predator increase because all life forms depend upon it, prey and hunter alike. Likewise, provide cover such as stones and hollow logs, with suitable plants for nectar, seeds and berries to create a better habitat for all of us. The benefit to us is the improved ambience and lifestyle.

Native hunters ensure the viability of organic properties because their 24-hour predatory forays for food substantially deplete pest numbers. Without them a natural system garden would disintegrate into a diseased, tatty mess because many plant pathogens and diseases are destroyed when their insect vectors are removed. Unfortunately, pet owners undo the good efforts they might otherwise achieve. Cats and dogs are the apex hunters in a garden and will happily kill any mammal and reptile they find.

## BIRDS

Small birds are perhaps the most useful to us. We encourage them with bird-baths, perches, nest materials and shelter shrubs. The larger birds such as kookaburras and currawongs often eat nestlings and eggs, so are not encouraged; small birds mostly eat insects, seeds and nectar.

The central position of our birdbaths

draws a constant procession of birds every day and when they traverse the gardens they naturally eat their way in and out. We never feed native birds for they are attuned to foods found in the wild. If fed, birds will breed up, possibly more than that location would normally support, then, if the free meal stops, many find they no longer remember how to forage for themselves. Besides, we want our thirsty, hungry visitors to gorge their way to and from our water points.

Our sweet corn can be relied upon to be grub-free, for our resident treecreepers and shrike thrushes delight in their removal to a better place. Superb wrens constantly grid the garden at ground level. They are so small they easily pass under most low leaves, like cucurbits, to peck off hidden food items. Willy wagtails and eastern yellow robins compete with many other bug hunters, while noisy friar birds and yellow-faced honeyeaters become carnivores when young are in the nest. At the change of seasons different and unusual birds drop in. Then it's a race for the bird identification book. It isn't uncommon for us to weed, pick produce or just appreciate the garden and not see any pest insects, just our happy and plump feathered predators.

## FISH

Numerous comet goldfish now inhabit our three ponds. They are essential in eliminating mosquito larvae and any other careless insect that falls in.

## WATER STRIDERS

These insects float on their six foot-pads by virtue of water surface tension and move swiftly across the pond to capture small insects. They also compete with the goldfish for any swatted flies we've flicked in.

## FROGS

Several varieties of frogs appeared soon after our ponds were established. One is a miniature of the green tree frog found in Queensland. Another is a small brown pointy-nosed one that out-sings all others (big frogs make big noises, little ones are all noise). Amphibians are excellent predators, preying on slugs, slaters and all manner of nocturnal pests.

## NATIVE SNAILS

We are very fortunate to have these uncommon but useful hunters. These carnivores actively prey on slugs and other snails, especially the common brown garden snail, which is perhaps ten times as large. Native snails have a shiny brown shell and a flattened appearance. They've become rare here on 'Shangri La' for we don't seem to have any feral common browns left.

## CENTIPEDES AND SCORPIONS

Denizens of cool damp 'hides' during the day, these efficient killers sting and devour a multitude of small insect life. Their own kind are not immune.

## SPIDERS

Usually a predator par excellence, spiders are rarely seen at our place, overwhelmed by the numbers of more mobile hunters. Spiders have a top spot on the menu of many birds and hornets. Even possums and gliders eat the odd one.

## PRAYING MANTISES AND STICK INSECTS

There are many more of these voracious hunters than can easily be seen, due to their superb camouflage. Mantises will eat almost any insect, their own kind included (built-in population control). Sometimes we find

mantis egg cases outside the garden area and carefully relocate the whole branch to a vulnerable vegetable crop.

The cases are of egg shape and size, light greenish in appearance and look to have been made of foam, which they were. The female encases her eggs in a foamy secretion, which quickly hardens. Young chew their way out and immediately eat, and eat, and eat. Aphids and other tiny pests are started on first, then they graduate to grubs, crickets, moths . . .

### LADY BIRDS

These most useful insects, especially the eleven-spot variety, suck the body juices from a multitude of aphids. Scale insects, mealy bugs and thrips are also devoured – up to 50 a day. The 28-spot ladybird is a vegetarian and competes with us for produce, therefore it is not very popular.

### HOVERFLIES

Hoverflies are small wasp-like flies with transparent wings. They hover around garden flowers and shrubs and sip nectar. They parasitise caterpillars and insert their eggs. When hatched, the young devour their host from within. We grow heartsease and other small-flowered herbs for the adults because they cannot compete with the more boisterous bees. The hoverfly is a good pollinator.

### HORNETS AND WASPS

We have plenty of the solitary mud-compartment builders that prey mainly on spiders and caterpillars. They sting their prey to a comatose state, deposit an egg inside the host and seal the victim within the mud tube. Apart from the mess made on rafters in outdoor areas, they do a good clean-up in the garden. We often see these tireless workers alight on a pond in dry times for water to make mud.

The communal paper wasps create a papery umbrella in a sheltered spot. If near human or pet activity these insects can be extremely anti-social! Unlike a bee, they can sting many times. The best course of action is to retreat to the nearest aloe vera plant. The sticky gel inside a leaf gives quick relief from pain and limits swelling. We always have several of these plants around the garden and barbecue area to alleviate the pain of stings, skin irritations and



Mantis egg cases are sometimes found around the garden.

accidental burns, however, in three decades we have never been stung by a bee or hornet in our garden.

### ANTS

Sometimes a food resource for lizards and some birds, ants eat almost anything alive or dead, even cane toads. They use their numbers to overwhelm much larger insects and recycle any organic debris.

Some varieties 'farm' aphids by placement on suitable plants and protecting the aphids from insect attack. The ants 'milk' their charges for honeydew, a sweet secretion. Ants can also be a pest in houses, make nests in garden pots, injure plants and steal seeds from cultivations. Still, ants are an essential part of a garden's biomass (unfortunately, I hear you say?).

### LIZARDS

Our main reptiles (skinks and dragons) eat ants, flies, slugs, caterpillars and anything else small enough to swallow. They draw the line at stinky shield bugs though. Lizards become quite friendly and follow us about, especially if cultivation is on the program. They drink from the birdbaths and have an occasional swim, usually after a moult. Substantial pieces of wood are left in the fishponds so that lizards have easy access. Since lizards prefer to lay eggs in soft ground, we position

piles of sand in protected spots. A miniature signpost has written on it: 'For lizard eggs only'. Yes, the piles are used.

### BATS

These nocturnal and voracious insect eaters fly the night shift over gardens and orchard. Noted as a predator of codling moth and mosquitoes, someone estimated that each insect-eating bat eats a thousand mosquitoes a night. We have a bat box sheltered by the verandah and directly over a garden pot to maximise their recycling efforts.

### ANTECHINUS

A carnivorous marsupial mouse, constantly on the prowl for anything small and alive, it is often seen around the garden areas and sheds. Mouse-size, greyish brown with russet patches near the ears, these cheeky creatures scurry, hop and poke their long snouts into the smallest openings. They continually search for spiders, bugs and caterpillars with enthusiasm, for, in the early winter most of the males die and the females semi-hibernate with young. We see these friendly assassins nearly every day in the warmer months.

### ECHIDNAS

An echidna eats thousands of termites when it finds and attacks the hardened termite mounds in the bush. Except for the autumn mating season, echidnas wander the scrub in solitary fashion until a termite mound is found. Its powerful front legs and stout claws make short work of a nest. When the galleries are exposed its long sticky tongue collects all termites in reach.

This marsupial, distantly related to the koala, can dig itself out of sight in the hardest ground in minutes. Only its spiny back is exposed during this time. Solitary and shy, they are rarely seen except as road kills in autumn. Unfortunately, they 'freeze' when traffic approaches. On 'Shangri La' we have several termite mounds in the open bushland and rarely do we find one that hasn't been raided. ♀



### TAKING STOCK

#### Household Waste

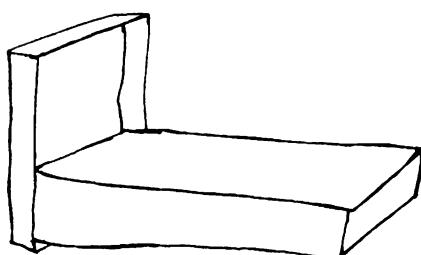
In 1996 Australians threw out 21.2 million tonnes of rubbish. ♀

# MAKESHIFT TOYS

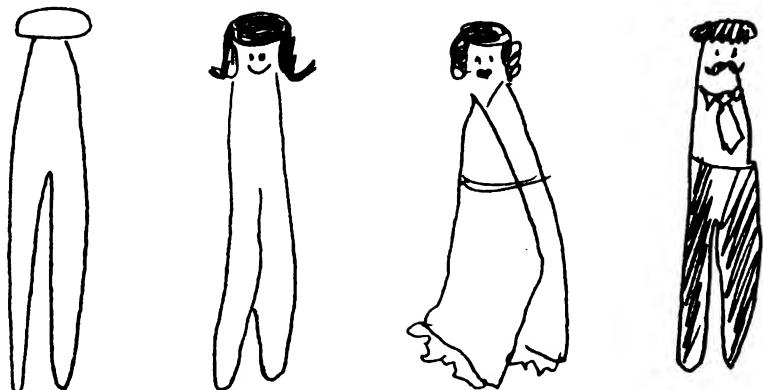
by Pam Cole, East Seaham, NSW.

Looking at the cardboard box in which my new shoes had arrived home, I had vague thoughts of how little such things had changed over the years. The cardboard seemed softer than the rough strawboard feel I remembered from childhood, and the structure had changed somewhat in that the old ones relied on stiff glue and staples while more recent models relied on intricate folding to keep in shape, but size and proportions were much the same. You could still . . . (idly and automatically my hands moved to place the pieces in position as the thought roamed into my head) . . . you could still fit the lid over one end to make the perfect dolls' bed headboard. Good gracious! Isn't it odd how memories from the past pop back at times?

My little sister and I had a rather bedraggled family of dolls in the early 1940s, and, what with wartime restrictions and a very slender purse, no way could our mother respond to our big-eyed wistfulness over dolls' beds and such when we spotted them in picture books or in Shirley Temple movies at the local 'picture-show'. When you live in the bush and you know you can't have something, you get cracking and do something about it. Imagination plays a big part, and imagination plus making something is an excellent recipe for occupying any child. If we were lucky enough to scrounge a shoe box we were made! It was a matter of placing box and lid together like this . . .



## Peg-Dolls



nothing could be simpler.

You then appropriated some hankies or scarves from Mum's drawer, padded the box with whatever came to hand as a mattress, bedded-down whichever rag-doll would fit without too much contortion of the legs, and tucked her in under the 'sheets' and 'coverlet', whose absence from the parental wardrobe you hoped would not be discovered for awhile. You were *of course* always going to paint this little bed or cover it with pretty paper, some day. The materials and the urge to actually do so never materialised and imagination took their place instead. To the outside observer it was a buff cardboard carton printed with a manufacturer's name; to our eyes it could have been anything from an ivory bed draped in pink satin and gilt cupids, to a camouflaged and bomb-proof cot for saving babies in the Blitz, to an iron bedstead with patchwork quilt just like our own. Such was the power of the imagination in our childhood.

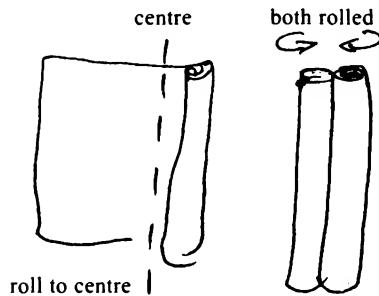
Once the gates of remembrance are open, just a chink, all sorts of things come pouring through. Even as I typed those last lines images popped into my head of peg-dolls and washer-dolls and grocery-carton motorcars.

Peg-dolls came to the rescue once when we were stranded in a railway hotel during the war and had to wait a day or so for transport to an aunt's house. With only minimal hand-luggage, and a lot of time to fill with two restless small girls on her hands, our resourceful mum came up with a brilliant answer. She had brought as a surprise for us a small packet of Plasticine. When we'd played this to death and arrived at that state of almost-whining boredom known so well to all parents of small children, she handed us three wooden clothes pegs of the dolly-peg variety. 'Get cracking,' she said. And that was that. We did have a stub of lead pencil, but nothing else. Imagination took over and we found the whole afternoon had slipped away while we 'invented' those few ingredients into a group of interesting doll-people.

We made Plasticine wigs for their round wooden heads, rolled tiny strips of red and black for lips and mustachios, drew on eyebrows with the pencil-stub, and made the weeniest pin-head dots of Plasticine for eyes. Once these were squished into place, with much discussion of the character and habits of the person under assembly,

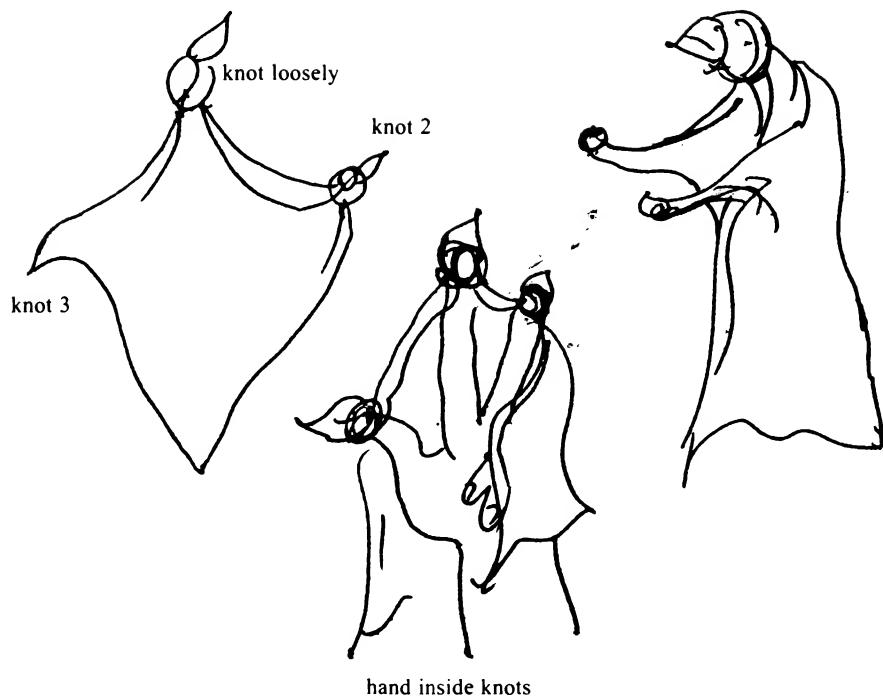
came the important question of clothes. Today in such circumstances coloured tissues would fill the bill; in our day it was hankies. Fortunately, no lady ever travelled without several spares, and our female characters were soon decked-out somewhat shapelessly in frills and colour. Imagination stepped in at this point, and those hankies were crinolines and fairy dresses from then on. The gentleman pegs got a good scribbling of the pencil over their straight wooden legs for trousers, with a Plasticine tie plastered to their imaginary shirt-front. After that our poor mother had to dream of earplugs as the dramatic sound and fury of the make-believe adventures and dialogue of these characters reverberated round our little hotel room.

Another time, stuck in a crowded steam-train lumbering along with its excess load of humanity (servicemen and women on leave, mothers and children like us travelling somewhere with hope of a brief reunion with a soldier-dad or wave goodbye to a troopship), we had exhausted looking out the window, storytelling and I Spy and all the rest. With still a long time till we could be tucked under the rug to sleep, Mum showed us how to make a roll-up doll. She delved into the chintz object called the cushion-carryall which she had made for travelling. This was a cushion with large pockets and a carry handle which you can read about in my book *Cottonwool Sandwiches*. It held our face washers, among a multitude of other things. These little towelling squares she rolled thus:



and told us that later we could draw paper faces to push in under the hood. Success! We made these often at later times, frequently with our 'good' hankies as we sat with our Sunday School classmates in church, bored witless by the sermon and longing to be running outside. We kept our hands well down

### The Preaching Puppet

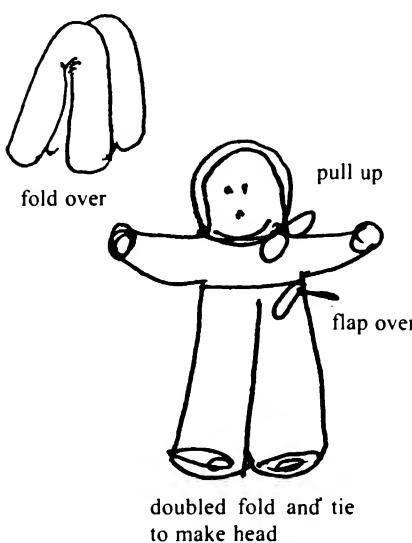


hand inside knots

below the choir rail, rolled and manipulated our 'dolls', and congratulated ourselves if the kids nearest us burst into giggles before we did.

And *that* reminds me that our grandfather could reduce us to helpless squeals of laughter by knotting a handkerchief into a puppet. Let me remind you that at this stage we were small, it was wartime, we lived in the bush . . . most things were marvels. He would tie knots in three corners, with the central one rather larger and looser than the other two.

Into this his index finger slipped,



assuming the appearance of the turbaned head and neck. His thumb and second finger slid into the other two knotted corners, the hankie draped around his hand like some kind of robe. His puppet got up to all sorts of tricks (Having your nose tweaked or hair ruffled by a puppet is fun when you are a preschooler!), but invariably at some stage would deliver The Pig Sermon. It went like this, with much fingerish arm waving:

*Gentlemen, it is a sin  
To eat potatoes and throw away the  
skin.*

*For*

*The skins feed the pigs  
And the pigs feed us*

And seeing this is *Grass Roots*, that's a good note on which to stop. ¶

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# Secrets Of GR Success

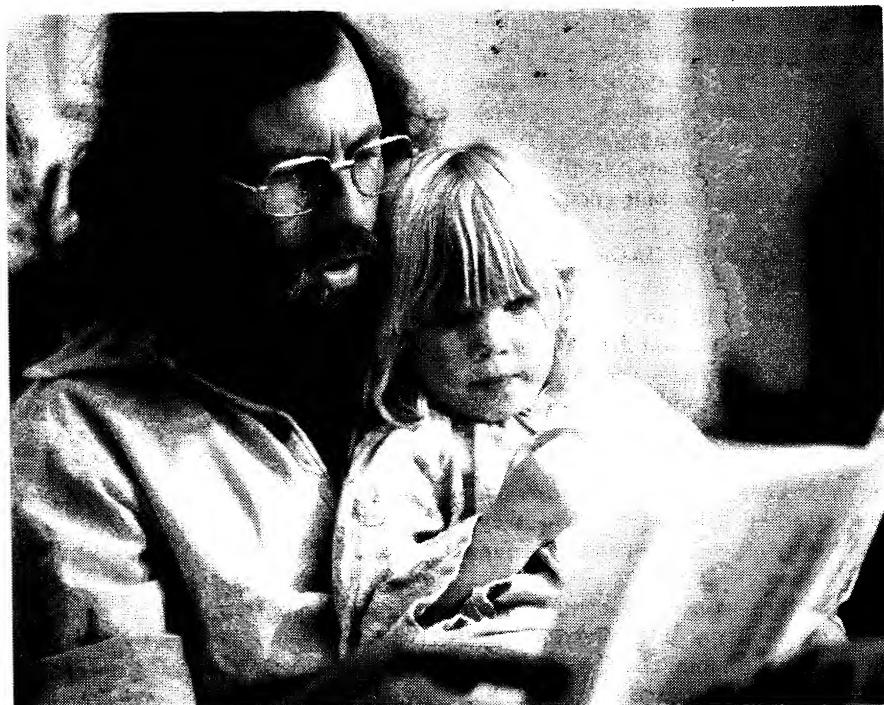
by Suni Miller, Nagambie, Vic.

One hundred and fifty issues of *Grass Roots*, I can hardly believe it either. In the year 2002, the idea of two 'dropouts' with no prior publishing experience pasting together a magazine on the lounge floor about how they bake bread and spin wool, well, it seems incredibly naive and completely unrealistic. The first issue was printed on a letterpress (every letter set by hand) and the first 18 issues were hand-wrapped, stuck with stamps and sent out to newsagents from home. The marketing department was a shoebox filled with likely looking names from the phone book copied onto cards, and the rolodex was scribbled in David's messy handwriting on the wall above the phone.

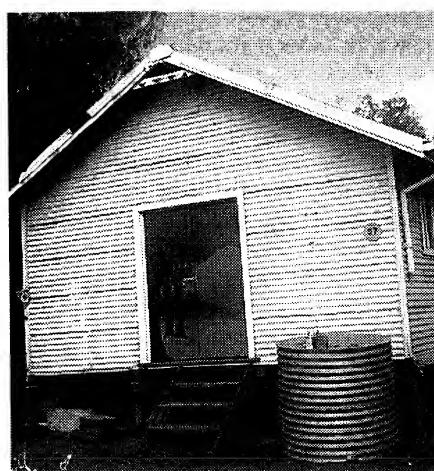
But, against every 'normal' rule of professionalism, GR is still going. I wasn't born till a year or so after the mag started, so wasn't strictly there for the very beginning, but as the 'GR daughter' I think I have a few unique ideas about what might have contributed towards reaching this amazing landmark.

## STYLISH AND USEFUL OFFICE DECOR

In the early 1970s, when Megg and David did the mag at home, macramé and seagrass were the key. The home-made macramé baler twine fly sennets hanging, with a few beads, from every door in our house were not just the acme of style, but integral in keeping flies away so they could work productively without distractions. As for seagrass matting, you couldn't vacuum it, you couldn't sweep it, and even if you tried it would shed grass at the same rate all over again the next day, so why bother? Hence, fewer housework worries and more time to do the mag. To complete the stylish decor, red and yellow 'Uranium - No Thanks' stickers on every available surface guaranteed



Books and reading were a part of leisure time as well as work, a very young Suni enjoying a story with David in the 1970s.



The old office with its colourfully painted doors, the work of a creative Megg.

that this was a safe workplace.

While there were no computers, there was always a guitar around. If deadline pressure became intense, David would oblige by strumming



some folk music – great for getting the creative juices going.

## SOME ANIMAL ASSISTANCE

Animals are an essential part of *Grass Roots*. The little office, which later became my bedroom, always had a pet chicken or two under a lamp, chirping in the corner. When these grew bigger they used to leap out of the box and attack the rubber band 'worms' left on the office floor. Seeing a tiny chicken trying to choke down a fat, wriggling rubber band was always worrying, even if it did have its amusing side. We usually managed to pull them out of their gullets, but a few got past and emerged the other end in the same shape and form in which they entered. I always got to play in the office and was as happy as one of our pampered chicks. It

is amazing what you can do with some paper doilies, gold stars, Letraset off-cuts and a pair of crinkle-cut scissors.

In 1980 Megg and David bought an old army barracks and we had a real office. Now with staff members, the nudity had to go, but not the pet chickens. Megg and David tried to work a normal 9 to 5 day, but were usually whipped off for animal emergencies midway through a deadline. The words 'the goats are out!' meant all hands chasing goats over the paddocks. Then there was the time our goat Boronia fell into the septic tank on Christmas morning and three Millers in their best threads had to pull her out of the mire, inch by stinking, kicking goatly inch.

## A FLEXIBLE APPROACH TO LEARNING

Another secret of GR's longevity is flexibility. Megg learnt how to answer a phone. Her shyness had meant that previously she would pick up and say nothing. The disconcerted caller would eventually quaver, 'hello?' or, if equally shy, hang up in confusion. Conversely, if callers got David, they were lucky to be off in under an hour. He's a good chatter.

The office ladies also learnt – how to flush a toilet with a bucket. They didn't seem to mind having to walk across a muddy farmyard to the outside dunny, but drew the line at snakes. Believe it or not, one lady even fell in the loo once. They also got used to cleaning turkey poo off their cars, as the poultry loved to sit on the warm bonnets on cold mornings.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF DIET

Healthy eating has been of particular importance to the GR gang. The tradition for staff birthdays was always that the birthday girl, or boy, had to bake and bring in their own wholemeal cake. Somehow, these days it has metamorphosed to a bakery-bought orange poppyseed, perhaps because Megg's theory was that if she put icing on a sponge, no sugar needed to go in the cake. Needless to say, her cakes were solid as a rock, but at least no one felt hungry for the rest of the day.

## REGULAR RELAXATION

Regular yearly holidays helped Megg and David get GR out. Holidays involved visiting every GR reader

known of in the area at a breathless pace, no days actually relaxing, and taking as many animals as possible. Only Megg and David could take a fleet of turkeys to Sydney for the Don Lane Show, one of which discovered herself in the dressing room mirror and wore herself ragged swearing and pecking at that cheeky hen in the reflection. Taking the little pet pig to Sydney involved skulking through the hotel hallways and coughing loudly every time it grunted in case fellow guests heard.

I improved on the cardboard-box approach to animal transportation. In my youthful quest for style, I actually had a chicken handbag. It was cube shaped, made from white wicker with a delightful gold thread, and had a red plastic rose on the lid and a little gold handle. It was the perfect size to carry a pet chicken with some straw. (I don't know where I kept my lippy, though.) In an elevator in a Melbourne hotel one day my chick chirped, and a lady winked at me and said, 'I know what you've got in there'. She was obviously from the country too.

## PUBLISHING IN THE MILLENNIUM

I don't know what secrets took the mags to completion during the late 1980s and early 1990s because I was at boarding school and took no notice whatsoever. In fact, I was terrified my peers would find out about my shady hippie background and stuck to wearing only conservative navy and white, just in case. I think I once told a classmate Sunshine was an old family name! Working here today, however, I don't think much has changed.

Yes, we are in a 'real' office with flushing toilets, but more often than not there is a chicken or two in there as well, waiting to be picked up to be a pet or despatched off to be a meal. We may have computers, but the galleys still get pasted up onto sheets with Megg's favourite rubber cement glue. Her ubiquitous glue balls, which look like they recently emerged from someone's nose, still lurk in funny places. Although we are aiming to go digital this year, I don't believe she will ever relinquish her rubber cement glue.

At morning tea we still constantly discuss vegie growing and try and flog off our gluts of zucchinis to each other. Megg's creative temperament (and swearing), the mass of paper (What?

Paperless office?), and the general chaos found on each Miller's desk hasn't changed. And it's not just the old guard. Our youngest GR worker, graphic designer Sabrina, even confessed she completed her VCE by creating award-winning lentil pictures ('The Four Seasons'), macramé, quilting and homemade peg Christmas decorations. She was obviously born for GR!

Looking through old copies of *Grass Roots*, the hippie clothing and long flowing locks have certainly changed, but I think the values espoused are timeless. I may be a late convert, but the satisfaction of growing your own vegies, hatching your own chicks, or doing something creative with recycled bits and pieces far beats anything on offer on late-night TV. I hope readers feel as I do, that *Grass Roots* is also about a warm community of like-minded people around Australia that we all belong to.

As for me, in GR125 I boldly stated that I would never be found getting my hands dirty with mulch and the like. Well, I'll have to bite my tongue because I spent all weekend doing just that. If I didn't still love my gin and tonics, chocolate and deckchair, I don't think Megg and David would recognise me. In fact, I'm a little afraid that by issue 200 I will be entrenched in mud, running a 1000-acre self-sufficient chook farm, or worse. So I'll keep my mouth shut just in case!

Happy 150th issue. ¶

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# A Wheelee Good Compost Bin

## Mark Two

by Graham (Wizard) Watkins, St Helens, Tas.

A short time after my article on recycling wheelie bins appeared in GR139 I had a phone call from a rather strange sounding fellow by the name of Otto von Sulo The Third. Now Mr Sulo claimed to be the wheelie bin baron of the entire free world and he was rather upset with what I had done to his great invention. His exact words were, 'Vot are you doing? You have vit all backwards. You nincompoop!' I was stunned. But on reflection I think he might have been right, about the backwards bit, anyway. (Not the other part, I think I would know if I was a nincompoop.) So Otto, I have studied and pondered and contemplated and come up with a new revised plan for all those unused wheelie bins you have in storage in an undisclosed location. I therefore present to you, and other GR readers, the new improved Wizard 'Mark Two' Compost Bin.

Basically, it is the same design as the 'Mark One'. It still has the bottom cut out of it. It still has the hole cut into the lower edge and the plastic pipe with

holes in it, screwed inside for ventilation, but it has some minor differences and one very major difference.

The minor differences are:

- You can also drill another 25 to 50 mm hole into the bin at the other end of the plastic plumbing pipe to further improve ventilation.

- You cut a rectangular section out of the piece you jigsawed from the bottom. This is to be approximately 350 x 200 mm. You then cut a 300 x 150 mm hole in the rear of the unit, near where the lid attaches. The larger piece can now be screwed into place with a 25 mm overlap all around the smaller hole to form a removable panel.

- You now remove both the wheels from the thing. (I'm sorry to all the purists out there, it's not really a wheelie bin any more is it? Maybe you people can leave them on, just for the sake of it.)

You also remove the lid and its fixing brackets from the body of the unit for later use.

Now, this is where the major change comes in. I know in my first article I

was very specific about turning the bin up the right way. This time, however, for something completely radical I am suggesting that we leave the bin upside-down instead. Not backwards, Otto, but upside down! Yes, and we keep it that way. What a novel idea, a compost bin in the shape of a compost bin, with ventilation in it and a panel at the bottom that can be opened to shovel the finished product out of. Pure genius. Please see the amended diagrams below.

Finally, you can either just sit the lid over the new top with a brick to keep it there, or attach it by some clever means such as a piece of old rubber inner tube or a hinge or whatever else takes your fancy; as long as it can be opened up out of the way and shut again. I will leave that to your own ingenuity. Just fill it up with whatever organic matter comes to hand, and happy composting.

So there you have it, Otto, my revised version. All thanks to your very helpful late-night phone call. Oh, and by the way your very baronnes, don't call me, I'll call you next time. ¶

Diagram 1

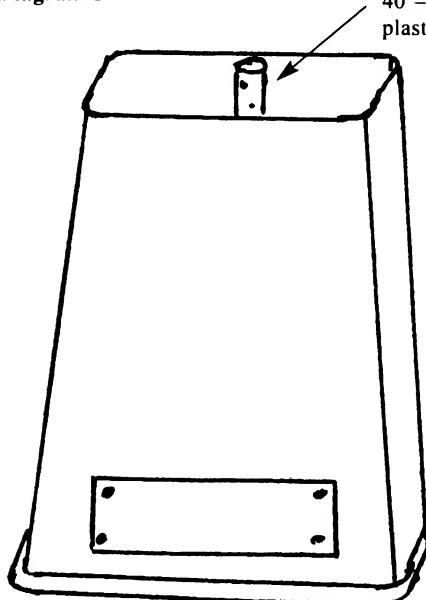
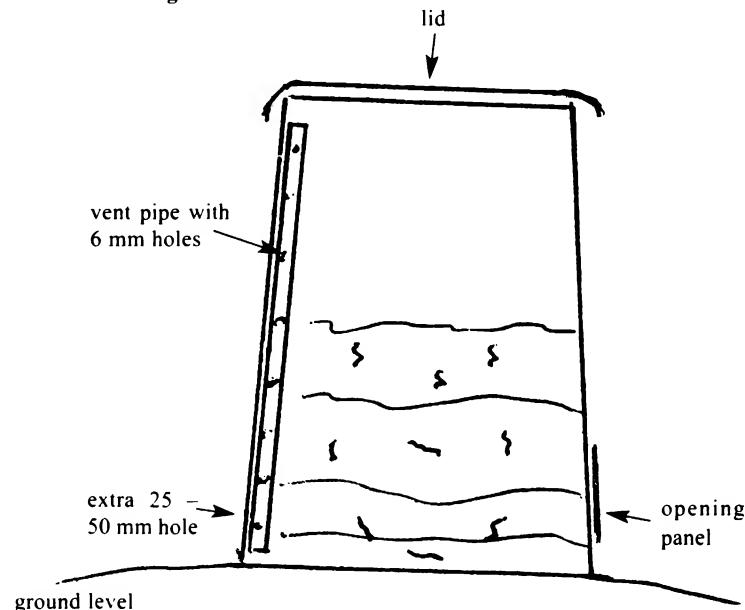


Diagram 2



# More On Ticks

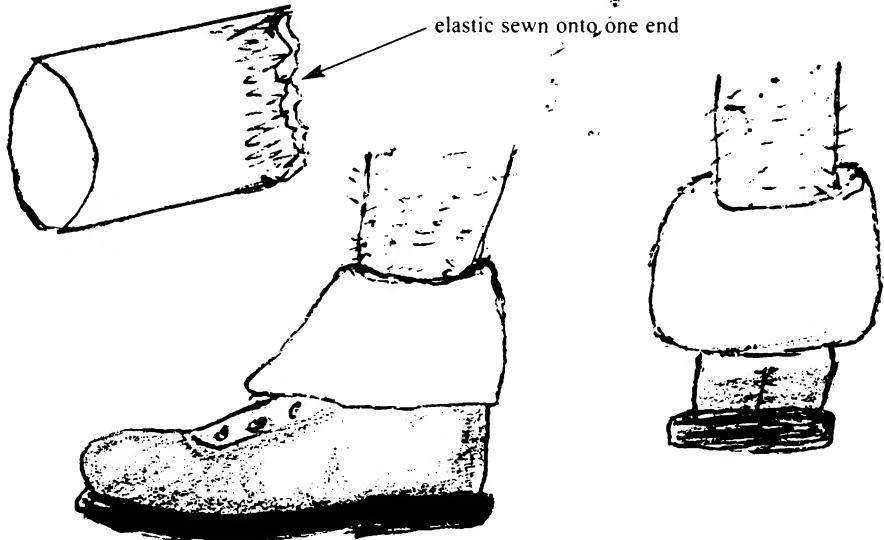
by Roberino, Arrawarra Beach, NSW.

I get a lot of grass ticks and shell backs, which are the next stage and larger. The Department of Agriculture in Lismore has good advice in pamphlets. I've found that encouraging birds by planting trees to attract them disposes of many insects. Also, lavender grown all around the house repels insects. Mix lavender oil (in a \$2 spray bottle from a supermarket) and water then spray yourself all over just before gardening to provide protection. I always shower after gardening and use lavender soap.

Ticks seem to be more active just after rain. Once bitten, I put some methylated spirits on the tick (kept in an eye dropper bottle), wait a couple of minutes and pull the weakened tick out with good tweezers. Some tea tree or eucalyptus oil on the wound helps stop the itching. Cats and dogs bring ticks inside, so constant fine brushing also helps.

If a large tick proves very embedded and hard to remove I will cut the body of the tick in half with nail or cuticle scissors. This seems to stop the tick from injecting any more poison into you and it stops its suction mechanism, which I think is a lot of the trouble. This as well as methylated spirits (first) works well.

A drawing cream such as Magnoplasm or Ichthammol ointment helps draw out any residual poison and irritants. A blob on a Band Aid works well and can be used on splinters, thorn



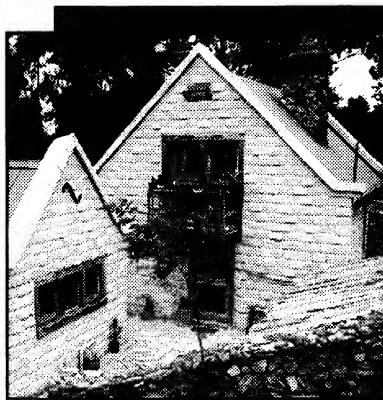
pricks and most bites. If problems persist, consult a health-care professional.

I asked a bloke who works on a banana plantation and it turns out that ticks are the least of his problems. Spiders, snakes, centipedes, scorpions and so on are in big numbers up in the hills. He said he always wears bowangs. Bowangs?

Hardware shops, selected haberdasheries, even supermarkets in the area stock an item like a gaiter, called (locally) bowangs or overboot covers. They are simply made at home with a sewing machine. I've seen people make them from sleeves of old shirts and legs of old trousers.

The idea is to put them on before you put your boot on, then turn them down after lacing up your boot. They may never appear on a fashion parade catwalk, but they stop a lot of unwanted items, including pebbles, dust, twigs and insects, from getting into your boots.

You can spray your bowangs and boots with insect surface spray as they do up in the hills, or use something like lavender oil, which I would think is a bit more ecofriendly. Well, there you have it – recycled shirt sleeves. This could be a cottage industry thing – start a new fashion craze with brightly coloured bowangs, floral bowangs, fluoro bowangs . . .



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# Hang On To Your Dreams

by Sue Lloyd, Kyneton, Vic.

**Over the years a recurring theme from *Grass Roots* readers has been that of pursuing their dreams. We've often been thrilled to hear that *Grass Roots* has been instrumental in helping people bring their dreams to reality. Having overcome major health and other problems in her life, Sue Lloyd has achieved her goal of a country lifestyle and business based around breeding alpacas and llamas. In this article she shares some techniques that helped her keep her dreams in focus.**

Hang on to your dreams no matter what. If the situation you are in seems bleak and daunting and the dream impossible – never mind. It is important to keep them in your mind, have them there to be brought out whenever you can.

Dreams do not necessarily have to be about material things or events, although that is fine if it is appropriate for you. They can be about such things as having peace in your life, living one day without worry, mending a 'damaged' relationship, or becoming more patient with what you regard as an irritating situation. Alternatively, you could hold a vision of people living in peace and harmony with themselves and each other and that peace extending between different races and countries and encompassing the planet.

## TRUST IN THEM

Trust that what makes your heart sing can be achieved, that it is the absolutely perfect thought. Do not allow yourself to be sold short on this vision or idea you are holding, you deserve it.

There is no need to listen to any suggestions as to what might be changed or altered, hold fast to your own innate sense of knowing what is absolutely the best thing for you and realise that you know this better than anyone else. There must be no room for doubt, simply an utter conviction that whatever it is will come about.

Remember to maintain the childlike innocence and trust in the process of

your life; know that what occurs will be something you will be able to handle; know that things will not be presented to you that will be harder than you can cope with. Instead of focusing on what currently may be causing difficulty or disharmony in your life, look for the solution. In this way you will be able to keep 'light of step' and will leave plenty of room for your dreams to settle all around you, like a blanket.

## LIVE THEM

Grab every opportunity, no matter how tiny, that comes your way to make your ideas happen. No excuses, no procrastination, no delays.

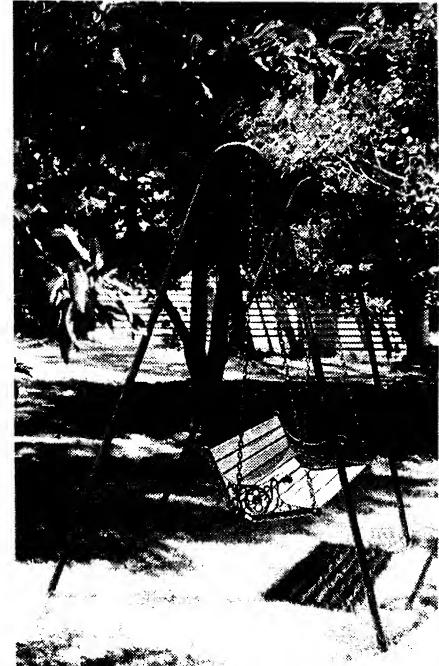
See what you can do to actually make the dream happen. Can you talk to someone, go somewhere, read some books, write a letter, put an advertisement in the paper, join a club, get fit, start a new hobby, get a job? All these are simply ideas; try some 'brainstorming' without judging what you come up with.

## PRETEND

Pretend that the dream has already come, enter fully into this pretence. You were able to play pretend or make-believe games when you were a child, so do it again. It all adds power to the weight of your 'wanting'. How does it feel now that the dream has arrived?

## Want them with Passion

Imagine the dream in full technicolour, how it might look, or sound, how you would feel, what people would say,



Allow time to play and time to dream.

what clothes you would wear, what you would be able to see, what sort of weather it was, how you would get there, who would be with you. Involve all your senses in this exercise.

## Daydream

See if you can find some time each day, 10 – 15 minutes would be fine, to simply sit and give full rein to your imagination. Involve yourself in this exercise, until it feels 'real' to you. With power and passion, give 'intent' to the thoughts and remind yourself that what is created on the inner level can be manifest in your outer world. Allow yourself to fully experience the daydream. This can be done in the car, waiting at the bus stop, in the shower, while you are taking the dog for a walk etc, etc. The important thing is to just do it.

## SHARE THEM

Share your vision with somebody else. Words, thoughts and ideas gain power and momentum when shared and

talked about jointly, this helps to 'cement' the dream and build the expectation and excitement – all positive emotions to encourage.

#### **Talk About Them**

Talk to anyone who will listen, to yourself, to your dog and/or cat, out loud if you are going for a walk. Listen for any 'messages' you may receive through a song on the radio or something in the newspaper and talk about it. Notice coincidences and comment on this aspect, in fact look for the synchronicity.

#### **Carry them Temporarily for Others**

Hold the vision for others if they find that they are not able to carry it temporarily. That is where the value of a dream shared can be so helpful, you can remind others to keep the focus on their vision, to bring back the uplifting thoughts and ideas and to start the train going again.

#### **Remind Others of their Dreams**

This is different from carrying them for others. Sometimes dreams can be verbalised when one is in a relaxed frame of mind or one's guard is down, or at a certain time, say on holiday. Then, when the regular routine is resumed, the dreams are forgotten. Remind each other that what was expressed is likely to be what will make one's heart sing and reiterate the thoughts and emotions.

#### **YOU DESERVE IT**

There are two components to dreams becoming reality, one is to believe as we have discussed, the other is to allow this to happen and even to expect it to happen. It is important that you believe in your own sense of worthiness, that you feel you deserve to have this wish come true, to know that it will be

appropriate for you and not to sabotage it by your thoughts or actions. In other words, if you think that you would be worth a new dress, a holiday, or a new car etc, but say in the next breath, well I do not deserve it, it would not happen to me, etc, etc, then the intent is not clear and the dream may come in a very watered down version, if at all.

#### **MAKE A START**

Think of ways in which you can do this. Be as creative as you like. Can you start saving the dollar coins in your change each day if your dream involves financial cost? Can you make a regular time 'for you'? Organise the children to be minded on a regular basis. It may only be a couple of hours a week, but those hours can be like a shining star in the fulfillment of your dream. You could investigate new projects and ideas, allow yourself some pampering, or maybe just sit quietly and see what you really do want to do. Sometimes in the stillness comes profound knowing and it is often necessary to come to a stop and make room for those ideas to come to you.

#### **WRITE ABOUT THEM**

Get a journal and start to write about these dreams. Make up stories where you are playing the central role; be as descriptive and creative as possible. Write different scenarios or endings for the stories, always positive and joyful but with infinite variety. Make it fun, keep it light, keep it focused on the ultimate outcome for you.

#### **DREAMS CAN CREATE MIRACLES**

Certainly, with combined dreams being held on a wider scale anything is

possible. If enough intent is given by a group for a unified dream the desire becomes extremely powerful and is likely to manifest more quickly. However, the vision you hold in your life will have an energy of its own and, once started with your desire, allowing and expecting, then truly you can create your own miracles. ¶

#### **TAKING STOCK**

##### **Bush Heritage**

The Australian Bush Heritage Fund was set up in 1990 in an effort to save 241 hectares of forest in the Liffey Valley, on the edge of the Great West Tiers in Northern Tasmania from woodchips. The forest was up for auction and Tasmanian Green's Senator Bob Brown used funds he had won for the Goldman Environmental Prize, and borrowed from the bank and others to secure the forest. The fund now operates through tax-deductible donations and has gone on to purchase land north of the Daintree River in Queensland, in New South Wales' Bega Valley and Kojonup in Western Australia. ¶

#### **TAKING STOCK**

##### **Alcoa Landcare**

The Alcoa Landcare Project is one of a number of examples of private enterprise demonstrating a commitment to environmental and social issues. In 1989 Alcoa gave \$6.5 million to support the National Decade of Landcare in Western Australia and Victoria, where it has operations. Activities have involved demonstrations of rehabilitation techniques, establishing seed banks and educational programs. ¶

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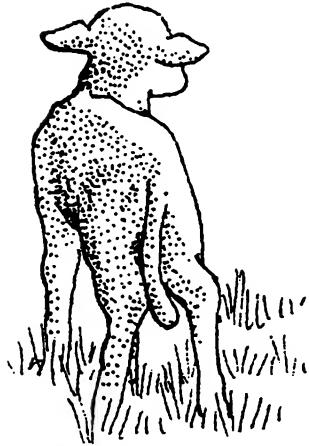
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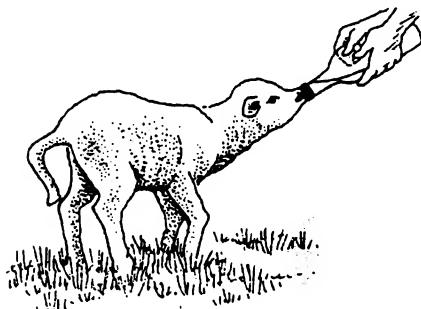
# Playing Mother To Lambs

by Katie Stewart, Northam, WA.



There are few sounds more pathetic than the bleat of a newborn orphaned lamb. It begs to be taken home and cared for. Caring for an orphaned lamb, however, is not always as easy as it may seem.

No matter how the lamb came to be an orphan, it is important in those early hours to try to ensure that it is given colostrum. This is the milk, rich in nutrients and antibodies, that it would have received from its mother in the first 18 hours. However, if it is unavailable, which is generally the case, an egg mixed with cow's milk (about 600 ml) and a little sugar can be substituted. It is definitely not as good as the real thing, but it is better than nothing. The first lamb I raised on this substitute lived to be over ten years old and I have had many others since then. If fed in small quantities, frequently through the first 24 hours, it helps to build the lamb's strength, though not its immunity.



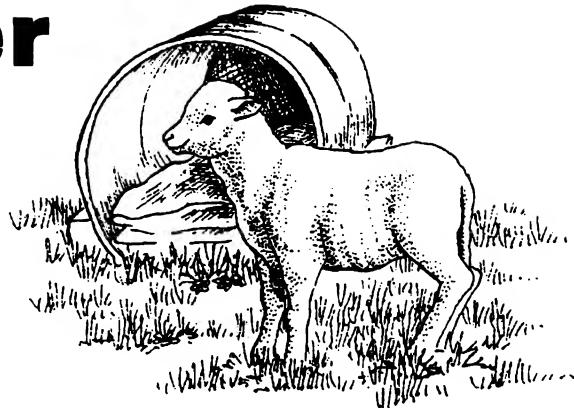
It is difficult to know how much to feed a lamb - it seems they will drink all day if given the chance - but little and often is the best policy with newborn lambs. Start with around half a litre per day in the first week and build up gradually from there. It very much depends on the size and health of the lamb. Do not be tempted to overfeed, this leads to scouring. The lamb should always have fresh water available and, from around two weeks of age, must have feed such as grass and pellets on which to browse.

Just as with newborn babies, hygiene is of extreme importance when dealing with young lambs. Bottles and teats must be rinsed with cold water, washed in warm soapy water and sterilised between feeds. This is especially important for lambs that have not received colostrum. Failure to do so will cause the lamb to scour.

Very young lambs can be fed from normal baby bottles, but as they get older these become too small. Special teats for lambs can be obtained from stock agents. These fit snugly over a tomato sauce bottle. Always be careful to hold the teat while feeding; some lambs suck very hard and there is a danger of choking.

When feeding a lamb make sure that the teat is sitting on top of the lamb's tongue and never underneath which could allow milk to enter the lamb's lungs, causing pneumonia. If, while feeding the lamb, you see milk leaking from the sides of its mouth, the teat is not sitting properly on the lamb's tongue. This is often a problem with weak lambs.

It is best to feed the lamb a special lamb formula, available from stock agents, that contains all the vitamins



and minerals required for optimum growth and health. However, if this is unavailable, normal full-cream milk powder can be mixed, adding extra powder to bring it up closer to the consistency of ewe's milk.

When to wean the lamb is really up to the individual. It is generally obvious when the lamb is gaining enough nutrients from solid foods and milk can gradually be cut down.

If raising only one or two lambs, housing is quite simple. A 200-litre drum on its side, with clean hay on the floor, makes a good shelter. The hay should be replaced each day. With very young lambs, especially if the number you are raising is small, it is also a good idea to put in a hot-water bottle, well wrapped in an old towel, to keep the lambs warm at night. Sick or weak lambs are probably best kept inside, or at least under the protection of a verandah or shed, until they are stronger. Make sure the lambs have some shade during the day and protection from the wind. Sunlight, however, is essential for the growth of lambs, so make sure that the pen is not too shaded.

Do not forget to include 'pet' lambs in the same routines as your other sheep, such as tailing and needling. They should also be ear-tagged as normal.

Of course, all these things are written in general terms. Lambs vary greatly and what is right for one might not necessarily work for another. Mixed-breed lambs, for example, tend to be a lot tougher than Merino lambs, and so can be weaned earlier. Big lambs, on the other hand, are not necessarily stronger than smaller lambs. In fact, they could be much weaker as a result of a difficult birth.

Artificially reared lambs are a lot of

work, but it is gratifying to see them grow into strong sheep. If you decide to put them back with the flock, it will take them some time to learn to be sheep, but even years later they will still cut out of the mob to come and see you, especially those that were raised alone. There are mercenary reasons for hand-rearing orphan lambs, but the truth is that despite all the work it is simply satisfying.

See GR 133, p54 for more advice on feeding orphan lambs, including a feeding chart. ☺

## PUMPKIN PICKING



Did you know that the older the pumpkin, the longer it will keep? So this means that it is best to eat the fruit produced at the end of the vine first and that the fruit closest to the central root will keep the longest. Leave plenty of the stalk when harvesting your pumpkins and keep the fruit on a dry board, away from the elements. Pumpkin vines will die following a good frost, so make sure you collect your fruit before this. ☺

# GARDEN BOUNTY

## Lemon Balm

by Cheryl Beasley, Robina, Qld



Lemon balm (or balm) is a perennial growing to about a metre high with leaves similar in appearance to mint. It needs to be restrained or it will spread rapidly throughout the garden. Plant it in a sunny position in a bottomless pot. Lemon balm is good for cleansing oily skin and will also stimulate the skin. It is a very refreshing herb that can be used in face lotions and creams for open pores.

### BALM WATER

2 cups lemon balm  
1 lt boiling water  
2 tbsp vinegar

Chop the balm roughly and pour over the boiling water. Leave to cool overnight then strain and add the vinegar. Use this water in the bath to refresh and invigorate.

### BALM COLDCREAM

½ cup lemon balm  
1 cup olive oil  
1 tbsp paraffin wax

Heat the oil and lemon balm for 15 minutes in a pan over hot water. Strain

and add the wax and melt through. Beat until cool.

### CLEANSING MOUTHWASH

½ cup lemon balm  
1 lt pure water  
2 drops tincture of myrrh

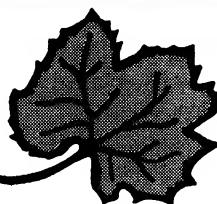
Simmer the lemon balm in the water for five minutes. Leave to cool overnight in the fridge then strain and add the tincture of myrrh. Keep refrigerated and use frequently.

### LEMON BALM BATH SACHET

3 tbsp lemon balm  
1 tbsp mint  
1 tbsp yarrow  
2 tbsp oatmeal

Combine the ingredients in a muslin bag and hang under the running bath water. Squeeze frequently to release the fragrance. ☺

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# LANDCARE Without Herbicides

by Shane Adams, Kyogle, NSW.

The Zero Herbicide Landcare Group – Kyogle was formed to enable its members to formally register the group, with its indicative name, on Landcare and Landcare-related databases; and to make obvious the intention of the group and its constituent members to practise caring for the land, and its waterways, without using herbicides. The group's membership is spread across Kyogle shire (the upper catchment of the Richmond River), rather than concentrated in one small (sub) catchment, to support a particular type of Landcare rather than Landcare in a particular location.

The group has a written charter to guide the landcare practices of projects undertaken in the group's name.

## CHARTER

### Directive 1

All Landcare projects undertaken in the name of the group must be implemented without the use of biocides, other than the use of food-grade substances or substances allowable under the National Standard for Organic Produce. For example, garlic and pyrethrum can be used as insecticides, vinegar can be used as a herbicide (on acid-sensitive weeds).

### Directive 2

Only organic fertilisers and mineral fertilisers (again, as per the National Standard for Organic Produce) can be



One of several reforestation projects being undertaken in the Kyogle shire with no herbicide use, surely a model for other groups to aspire to.

used on projects undertaken in the group's name. However, these need not be certified organic. For example, non-certified Dynamic Lifter and animal manures from noncertified sources can be used in tree plantings, but urea and superphosphate cannot.

These directives can only be rewritten upon agreement at a formal group meeting by a majority of the group membership, including at least two of the group executive.

### Policy 1

The group will seek to spend money as locally as possible at all times.

### Policy 2

The group will seek to prioritise the employment of workers to implement project works as much as possible (rather than emphasising volunteer work).

### CURRENT PROJECTS

Group members are currently involved in three projects in Blackhorse Creek Valley, on two private properties. The two projects undertaken in the group's name encompass restoration of lowland

subtropical rainforest (an endangered ecological community), restoration of a small area of riparian rainforest, and restoration of *Eucalyptus* and *Lophostemon* forests. The group has partial input into a large-scale (several kilometres) riparian rainforest restoration project, also implemented without herbicides. These projects are funded by landholder contributions, Department of Land and Water Conservation (DLWC) and (for one project) Ethical Investment Ltd. The riparian rainforest restoration projects involve Registered Property Agreements with DLWC, to conserve these areas in perpetuity.

The group is also involved in a project to restore lowland subtropical rainforest in Horseshoe Creek Valley, adjacent to the World Heritage-listed Border Ranges National Park. This project is funded by landholder contribution and by DLWC.

The group's current involvement on public land involves a riparian planting on the upper banks of the Richmond River in Kyogle township. This project

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was started by Kyogle Landcare Group in 1999, and has since been maintained, out of necessity, by both Zero Herbicide Landcare Group - Kyogle (labour) and Kyogle Landcare Group (equipment). Unlike the other projects, which are on basalt-derived clay soil types, this river planting is on alluvial sandy soil. This soil type, on a river bank, is the perfect example of where herbicide-free Landcare is required.

## FUTURE PROJECTS

The projects planned for the future (by the current membership) are extensions of existing plantings on private land, and a planting around the shores of a freshwater lake in Kyogle township. This lake is of cultural importance to local Aboriginal people, and the project is expected to involve the Aboriginal community.

## FINANCES

The group utilises the local credit union, Summerland Credit Union, for banking services. This is because of the more ethical nature of (local) credit union financial services, compared to most banks. We urge other Landcare groups to do likewise, rather than utilise banks that invest in less-than-ethical enterprises such as export woodchipping, land clearing and gold and uranium mining, as most banks do.

## EMPLOYMENT

This Landcare group believes that the failure of the Landcare movement to

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This lush area of native vegetation was planted in February 1999.

facilitate employment as a part of the National Landcare Program is a serious social problem that severely limits the progress of Landcare, and trivialises Landcare in the psyche of the Australian community. It is also an environmental problem in that it results in the unnecessary overpromotion and overutilisation of chemical methods in Landcare, rather than procuring sufficient funding from the Australian community to fund a better Landcare program that includes Landcare employees.

As a result, the group actively seeks funding to employ people to plant and maintain trees for our projects (something made very difficult in the case of government-funded Landcare projects, under the guidelines of the National Landcare Program), as well as using volunteer labour as other groups do. Ethical Investment Ltd has been prepared to help us in this respect.

## NEW MEMBERS

Zero Herbicide Landcare Group - Kyogle desires to promote its practices and increase its membership base. Local persons interested can contact Shane Adams 204 Blackhorse Rd, Kyogle, NSW 2474. Ph: 02-6633-3331.

The group would also be happy to see more zero-herbicide Landcare groups in other parts of Australia. It has therefore inserted 'Kyogle' at the end of its title, so that other groups can

be formed under the name 'Zero Herbicide Landcare Group,' with the name of their location added at the end.

Next time I'll describe some of the methods used to deal with specific weed problems without using herbicides. \*

\*\*\*\*\*

## TAKING STOCK

### Landcare

Landcare was first registered in 1986 with support from government, the Australian Conservation Foundation and the National Farmers Federation. Its brief was to tackle a range of land protection issues, and to involve the community in planning for and implementing the repair of the environment. It aimed to achieve sustainable land use by the year 2000. \*

## Fresh Bee Pollen

450 gram sample pack \$11.95  
incl p&p.

1.9 kilo pack \$39.95 incl p&p.  
Larger amounts @ \$15 kilo + p&p.

 Mrs N Tobin,  
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# CONTACTS

## GOODBYE and GOOD LUCK

by Mary Horsfall, Longwood East, Vic.

We are saying goodbye to a *Grass Roots* icon, the famous Contacts section of the Grassifieds. These ads have amused us, moved us, annoyed and frustrated us, and provided a link and a lifeline to many readers. Over the years we have been heartened to be told of happy relationships, and even marriages, resulting from Contact ads.

Prior to the introduction of classified ads in GR 38, with the first officially designated Contacts section, people were making contact by writing 'soul mate' letters in to Feedback. The first GR wedding that we know of came about through a correspondence started in this way. Margaret and Michael Sweeney married in December 1981, after a prolific correspondence. A couple of years later, another relationship, this time of a former *Grass Roots* staff member, developed in a similar way and led to a second GR wedding. We have lost track by now of the number of relationships in which the parties came together via Contact ads; our favourite couple, though, would have to be Leslie and John Ardon, two disability pensioners who married in May 1998. You can read their heart-warming story in GR 131.

Many readers have told us that though they were not interested themselves in meeting a partner through the Contact ads, they always read them for the amusement, amazement and sheer interest in the way some of them were written. I must admit that we in the office have often been convulsed with laughter, exclaiming in disbelief, and sometimes even sharing our admiration at a neat or novel turn of phrase.

Staff at the time (GR 40) must have been puzzled by the 'middle-aged medieval musician', a confirmed bachelor, who was after someone wanting to share 'harpsichord, crumhorns and house . . . and disgust at the demented Danish despot'. We wonder if George,

in GR 49, a '1934 drop Australian male', found a genuine *Grass Roots* lady to offer his 'right-hand harness position' to. Or whether the very honest Elizabeth in GR 46, who described herself as 'stubborn, emotional, sometimes unpredictable and unrealistic, not beautiful or rich but definitely human', ever found her kind but strong man. Or if the 'unrepentant 29-year-old hippie Peter Pan' who advertised in GR 75 was fortunate enough to have a reply from Tinkerbell.

Then there was the man concerned about where his future 'she' might prefer to live: 'Tricky, when I have yet to meet her. Is it you? Dare you risk losing a 45-cent stamp?'

A common theme was the desire for a partner with interests in common to share 'paradise'. One advertiser in GR 60 summed up this hope by writing: 'Paradise without a kindred spirit seems hellish.' Often the request was for someone to share travels and adventure: 'I'm seeking a fellow adventurer! Are you passionate, enjoying all that makes your heart sing, with zest?'

Many advertisers saw the possibility of finding the right person as the fulfillment of a dream, as did this one in GR 80: 'Is your life full of unfulfilled dreams? Maybe I could be the person to fulfill them. Dreams are my stock and trade.' Or this male doctor in the same issue who wrote: 'I have dreamed an impossible dream and I would like to meet a lover.'

Others were more prosaic. David in GR 57 described his eyes as compost coloured and told us his looks were good, 'at least that's what my mother told me'.

Some advertisers have gone to extraordinary lengths to make their ads stand out from the crowd. One, in GR 103, wrote his ad as a letter, beginning with the greeting 'Dear Gypsy Lady',

and paid extra to have his ad formatted in paragraphs as he designated. The ad covered most of a column, describing in detail the advertiser and his requirements. It finished with the word 'Stars, crystals and rainbows. Love is happiness.' We hope Paul found his Gypsy lady and happiness.

As another means of making their ads unique, there were talented people who wrote them in the form of poems, some even paying to have them formatted in a particular way. To do them justice the following deserve to be quoted in full. Enjoy!

Sonja from the golden west NSW wrote in GR 56:

*Hey I'm a dreamer, full of beans,  
like to meet you wearing jeans, where  
the road turns down the country. I'll be  
waiting by all means.*

In GR 105 an anonymous poet wrote:

*If at times you're feeling lonely,  
Or you have some time to spare.  
Write to me a letter,  
Tell me if you dare,  
About yourself, your dreams for life,  
Or about the things, for which you  
believe,*

*And I will tell you how I feel,  
If your letter I receive.  
For I am just an honest man,  
With peaceful, simple ways,  
Of enjoying nature's beauty,  
While learning through the days.  
I feel that I have much to share  
And give to Mother Earth.*

*So GR ladies write to me,  
Give our friendship birth.  
Jacko, in GR 114, wrote:  
At last a chance, or so it seems,  
To meet the man who haunts your  
dreams.*

*Every month you say you'll write,  
And every month you die with fright.  
If you don't know what to say,  
Well, I don't want a resumé.  
Your name, address, now, straight*



away,

I want to contact you! Today.  
Of course a young girl would be  
nice,  
'Twould fill an old man's life with  
spice.  
But slim & 40, dark or fair,  
You'll never never know till you go  
there!

A few people have placed ads with notable frequency and regularity. The 'mechanically minded' Ian, for example, placed a lengthy ad in the magazine at least once a year over many years in search of a permanent relationship with a lady who 'dresses casually'. Arthur from Lillifield has been looking for his lady and placing ads intermittently since at least issue 96. For a number of years there were frequent ads from a good looking country girl who lived on her parents' sheep property. Did she ever find her ideal man, 'without tattoos on the body'? The ads stopped without explanation.

Our saddest experience arising from the Contact ads was the sudden death of a young woman soon after she had placed her ad. Her family requested that we return the numerous letters she received, with an explanatory note. This was probably the hardest task of my 13 years at GR.

There was, undoubtedly, a dark side to the Contacts. As early as GR 43 there was a warning printed regarding dodgy advertisers from the Philippines. This was repeated in issues 44 and 48. It continued to be a problem, however, with many complaints being received by us about the ethics of certain overseas

advertisers, including some from Fiji. Finally, after about issue 116, we decided to cease accepting ads from overseas. Not all overseas ads, though, were suspect. Recently we had a phone call from a man who told us he had met his wife, a Filipina, through a Contact ad and they had been married for 20 years.

Another type of problem arose concerning sexually explicit language. Although we always tried to tone down potentially offensive language, readers still complained about this from time to time. On the other hand, some advertisers showed a lack of cooperation when asked to rewrite their ads, one even going so far as to send threatening and very graphic material.

When *Grass Roots* first began publishing Contact ads it was probably the only publication to do so. Certainly, there were few ways for 'alternative lifestylers' to make contact with like-minded soul mates. The section grew in popularity until reaching a peak in the mid 1990s. Recent years have seen a decline in the number of ads, a result of more opportunities for advertisers, including the Internet. Recent changes to anti-discrimination legislation have made the legality of much of the wording commonly used by advertisers questionable and, in view of the declining numbers of ads, we decided it was an opportune time to end this classification.

Our best wishes to former advertisers. Congratulations to those who found their soul mates to share a self-sufficient paradise, and good luck to those still looking. ¶

## TAKING STOCK

### Uranium Policy

The Hawke government approved a Three Uranium Producers policy in 1983. The accepted sites were originally Nabarlek and Ranger in the Northern Territory and Olympic Dam in South Australia. The former was decommissioned in January 1995, but the other two are still operational. Today there are a number foreign companies taking advantage of Australia's (post-Hawke) more relaxed attitude to uranium mining, setting up operations in Australia using dubious in-situ leaching. At the Honeymoon site there are no plans to

rehabilitate groundwater after mining and government believes the mine can now become fully operational; and there is still a push to go ahead with mining at Jabiluka in Kakadu National Park, despite the traditional owners being against this. Ranger is one of the most highly regulated mines in the world, with the tailings dam being a closed circuit and unable to overflow. An expansion to the Olympic Dam was announced in 1996 and there are concerns that water consumption could rise to 42 million litres a day. ¶

## The Permaculture Research Institute

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1158 Pinchin Rd, The Channon,  
NSW 2480, Australia

# Sash Window Cord Repairs

by Keith Upward, Darrawite Guim, Vic.

During my years as a carpenter/builder, I worked in many old houses fitted with double-hung sash windows. Invariably, a great number of these windows were inoperable because of broken sash cords. In many instances, the top sash was simply nailed shut while the bottom window was propped open with a stick 'and mind your fingers when you remove the stick!'

At first sight it seems to be too hard a repair job for the average home handyperson and the cost of bringing in a tradesperson appears prohibitive. Few tradespeople under the age of 50 would have the experience necessary to tackle the job economically in any case. The traditional-sash balance window frame, however, is a precision-made piece of joinery and, although not immediately apparent, it is designed for easy maintenance (cord replacement).

I passed by our local pub while it was going through extensive renovations and was lured by a 'Free Wood' sign. Alas, I was too late to save a cedar double-bay, double-hung sash window frame from the wrecker's ball, but I did manage to salvage enough parts to reconstruct 50 percent of it in order to demonstrate the inner workings and cord replacement procedure for the benefit of GR readers. It would have taken a competent carpenter no more than half an hour to remove this window intact prior to demolition. Not to have taken this option is, in my opinion, environmental vandalism.

## SASH CORD REPLACEMENT

*Note! It is best to replace all cords, while you are carrying out repairs.*

Remove the staff beads from the sides of the window frame by gently levering with a blunt chisel or broad tip screwdriver (fig 1). Raise the first sash slightly and remove from frame.

Using the same method, gently remove the parting beads (fig 2), then remove top sash. This will allow you to remove the pocket fillets (fig 3), which will expose the weights hidden in the



Figure 1: Remove the staff bead.



Figure 2: Remove the parting beads.



Figure 3: Remove the pocket fillets.

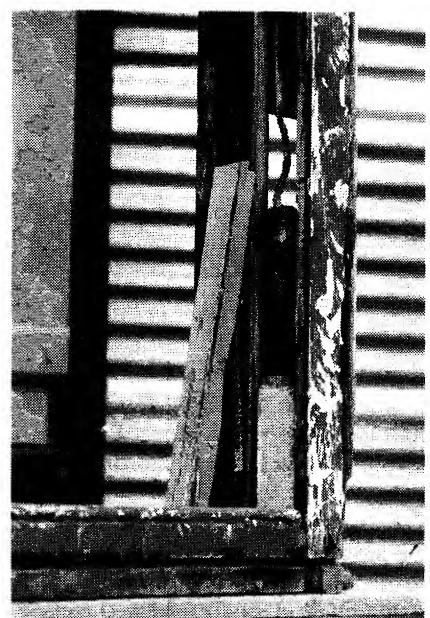


Figure 4: Weight within the box frame.

box frame (fig 4). You might find that it is easier to score the paint lines with a sharp knife prior to removing beads and fillets.

Before removing the broken sash cords from the sashes, measure the exact length for the new cords (fig 5), allowing enough to tie off a figure of

eight knot. At this stage it might be a good idea to carry out any other maintenance on the sashes such as replacing broken glass, renewing putty, or preparing for painting by stripping off years of old paint build-up.

Now you can start fixing the new cords. I have used rope in this demon-

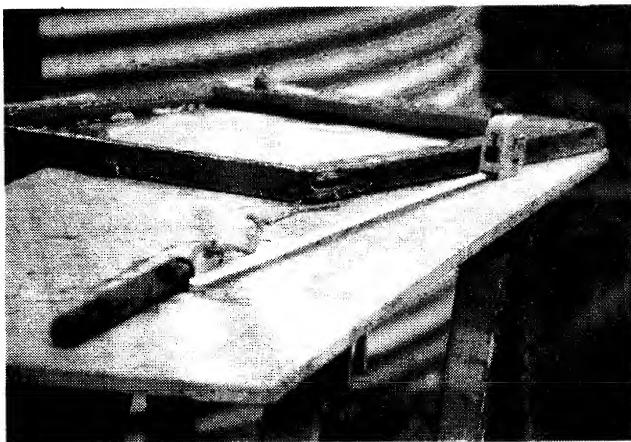


Figure 5: Measure length for new cords.

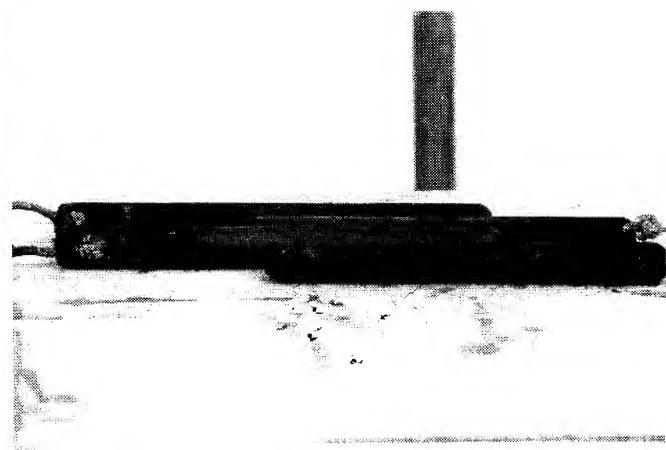


Figure 8: Weights for bottom sash are heavier than for top.

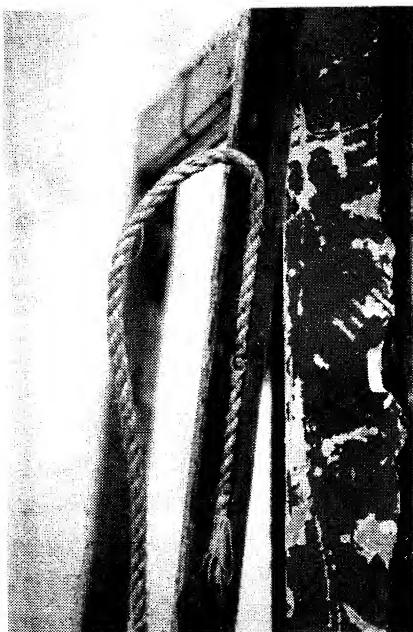


Figure 6: Fix cords to sash.

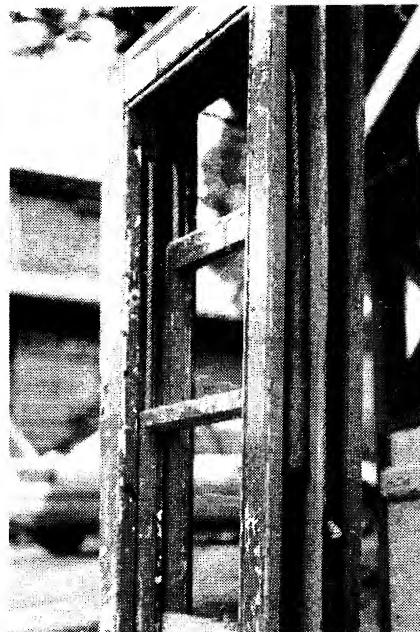


Figure 7: Feed mouse through pulley.



Figure 9: Reconstructed window showing inner workings.

stration, but it is best if you use proper woven sash cord. I prefer to fix the cord to the sash first, but you can start with the weight first (the proper way) if you wish, whichever you find easier. Use 25 mm clouts to fix the cords to the sash (fig 6), then tie a length of string to the loose end, attach a weight, nail or small fishing sinker, to the other end of the string (this is called a mouse). Feed the mouse through the pulley at the top of the frame (fig 7). Grab the mouse through the pocket and pull the cord through the pulley. Using a figure of eight knot, attach to the weight which will be marked with the correct weight to suit the sash, the weights for the bottom sash will be heavier than those for

the top sash (fig 8).

When you are sure that all is correct and the sashes are sitting snugly and working smoothly in the frame, you can commence to replace the pocket fillets, parting beads and staff beads in that order. If you find that your windows rattle after these repairs, just move the staff beads in a fraction before finally nailing

If you tackle your first sash cord repair slowly, carefully studying each component as you go, I'm sure that you will come to the conclusion that it is not such a difficult task after all. The reconstructed window is now permanently fixed in my woodwork gallery as a display unit (fig 9 shows inner workings of a box frame window).

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# Days Of Brown Rice And Kerosene Lamps

by Anne Jensen, Mullumbimby, NSW.

'My first recollection of them is from the very early 1970s. This rather odd looking fellow came into the café. We had never seen anyone like him before. A week later there were two more just like him.'

Pat Pstaltis is recalling the arrival of the hippies into the small northern NSW town of Mullumbimby. The Pstaltis family has owned the Popular Café in Mullumbimby since World War II and has witnessed many changes in their town, but perhaps none that happened with such rapidity and profound effect as the influx of the hippies in 1971.

'We had got to the stage where the town was virtually at rock bottom. I know we were just eking out a living.'

The hippies turned things around over a period of twelve months.'

Dairying and banana growing had been the economic base of Mullumbimby, but the 1960s saw a decline in prosperity. The dairy industry had been hard hit by the increasing popularity of margarine; the butter factory had closed, and in the late '60s the banana industry was devastated by gluts and low prices. By 1970 many of the dairy and banana farms were deserted. It was these abandoned properties that the hippies leased or purchased.

Yet the hippies' arrival in Mullumbimby was just a tiny part of a social phenomenon widespread in the Western world. Peter Cock, in his book *Alternative Australia*, argues that the

Vietnam War was the catalyst for the alternative movement: 'This war set fire to revolt.' Initially that revolt was centred simply on opposition to the war, but it broadened into a rejection of society's values when the war came to be viewed as the outcome of a corrupt system wherein government and business interests were integrated. Many young people chose to opt out of this society that they believed was irretrievably dominated by a few people who had power over the economy, politics, the environment and the lives of all citizens. A more alarmist group saw dropping out as a matter of personal survival. They believed that a society which defined progress as ever increasing production and consumption was



The hippies' arrival in Mullumbimby was a tiny part of a social phenomenon widespread in the Western world that saw young people rejecting the values of a consumerist society.

fast heading towards self-destruction. This group saw an urgent need to set about housing and feeding themselves, with no dependence on society, if they were to survive what they believed was the imminent collapse of the economy and social order.

Colin and Nancy Scattergood were among the first alternative settlers in Mullumbimby. In 1971 they purchased 420 acres of rugged banana growing land in the Main Arm Valley, north of Mullumbimby, with the intention of setting up a commune.

'The aim was to be as independent from society as possible, to earn money from arts and crafts and to produce our own food from the land.'

However, the property, later to be called Kohinur, had no buildings, so the Scattergoods sought temporary rental accommodation.

'We had met Tom Motts who lived up the top end of Main Arm. He was the owner of this incredible old village of about 12 houses that had been homes for his farm workers. But the banana industry was in a slump and the houses were empty. We rented the whole village – which was known as Finn Village because the last lot of tenants had all been Finnish immigrants – for 12 dollars a week. We went back to Sydney and told friends what we had done and within weeks people began flooding up here.'

The houses were soon transformed into hippie caves lit by candles, reeking of incense and draped with swathes of coloured silk. There were magic mushrooms – considered the organic equivalent to LSD – littering the paddocks behind the houses. Marijuana was about, but it 'was not a huge focus. In those days smoking cannabis was very much a ceremony – like passing the peace pipe in a tribal society.'

Finn Village, accommodating 30 or more people, functioned for many years as a transition between city life and moving onto one's land, not only for prospective Kohinur shareholders but for many other communal groups and individuals as well.

A few miles from Finn Village a second group set up home in a banana storage shed on land leased by the McIlrath brothers. Dave McIlrath recalls his arrival in the district in 1971.

'I really believed that the collapse



of the economy was only months away and that it was essential to grow one's own food and to be able to defend one's property against the starving hordes that would soon be flooding out of the cities.'

There were eight people living in one small shed. Conditions were primitive. Water had to be carried to the shed and the toilet can carried away. There was no electricity and the diet consisted of brown rice and vegetables cooked in one big pot over an open fire. Visits to town were rare, partly because of the necessity to negotiate 27 creek and causeway crossings in order to get there. The jeep that the group shared soon acquired the nickname Snorkel in tribute to its impressive ability to keep going when almost totally submerged. Like Finn Village, the Banana Shed served as a training ground and jumping-off point to more permanent settlement.

The Cosmic Song and Dance Company consisted of 13 individuals who pooled together their money and paid \$3000 for a 120-acre hill of bush and abandoned banana trees. They called their commune Narada. However, the group lacked consensus as to how their community should develop, and this diversity of vision undermined community activities on Narada. Yet they did succeed in 're-creating the village', as many of them had hoped to do, and Narada played host to the hippies later attracted to the area by mass media stories.

'Those were the days of brown rice and kerosene lamps and of hippies driving up Main Arm Road yelling out the windows of rainbow-coloured Kombis: "Hey man! Where are the communes?".'

Closer to town, Nicholas and Jane Shand purchased a 210-acre former grazing and banana property at Coopers Lane.

'We wished simply to get out of the city and to take control of our own lives.' It was a gesture to our times, a waving of two fingers at materialism.'

The Shands came with the intention of setting up a commune and, like Narada (now named Karu Kali), accommodated countless visitors.

'It was like a huge camping ground. There were hippies in Kombis and caravans all over the place. Some stayed a day or two, some for several weeks, but gradually more permanent people came and began to build houses.'

Nicholas set up a food co-operative servicing the alternative community. A shed was built on the Coopers Lane property to store the goods and the distribution day rapidly turned into a social event with music making, picnicking and the bartering of craft goods and excess garden produce. This barter day in turn metamorphosed into the Main Arm Market held on the Kohinur commune, not only a day of trading but also a joyous celebration of hippie lifestyle and philosophy.

This then was the small beginning of alternative settlement in the Mullumbimby district. News of the hippie enclave quickly spread by word of mouth to the cafés, campuses and pop festivals of the coastal cities and new settlers arrived daily. It has been estimated that over \$100,000 was spent by hippies in acquiring land in that first year – a huge amount in '71/72. By 1973, at the time of the Aquarius Festival in Nimbin, there were at least 500 alternative families in the Mullumbimby district.

Contrary then to much popular thinking, the Aquarius Festival was not the beginning of alternative lifestyles in Australia, but rather the coming together of many people already pursuing them.

Another myth that needs to be dispensed with is the one that says that all those early hippies were on the dole. In fact, the dole was next to unobtainable

in the early '70s and the hippies either lived on savings, disappeared back to their home cities periodically to earn money, or relied on their creative and entrepreneurial skills. The hills and valleys abounded with artists and craftspeople: jewellers and dressmakers, carpenters and candlemakers, musicians and writers. Colin Scattergood on Kohinur ran a very successful business for many years making and selling perfumes and incense. Robert Rubens made home-ware items from locally harvested bamboo. Don McCormack pioneered an alternative coffee.

'I roasted soya beans, barley and rice in my woodstove, ground the grains by hand, blended it, and sold it under the name True Brew.'

The Main Arm Mango Company ran trucks up to Stanthorpe, bought fruit directly off the farms and sold it door to door in the hippie community. The Bunyip Banana Company collected green bananas (left unwanted on the ground by local farmers), peeled, sliced, cooked and dried them, and sold them as banana chips. Some hippies made money growing and selling marijuana. Indeed, so lucrative was this activity for a time that there are those today who claim 'cannabis was a transition economy for Mullumbimby'. The 'industry' began its decline when raids by policemen in cars and helicopters became a serious occupational hazard.

There were attempts by various groups to farm communally, but all of them failed within a year or two through a combination of factors: poor soils, not enough water or too much, lack of capital and equipment, and inexperience and ignorance.

'The local farmers used to entertain themselves by hanging over the fence watching us attempt to drive the tractor in a straight line.'

Nevertheless, while communal efforts may have failed, many families achieved some measure of self-sufficiency with kitchen gardens, chooks and a cow or two.

By the mid-1970s the golden era of hippie dreaming was fading. Now the dole was readily available and its coming had all but killed the entrepreneurial spirit. Children were reaching school age, prompting a return to a more conservative life for many. Electricity was connected to the huts

up in the hills and people became cocooned in their homes with the easy entertainment option of television. The Main Arm Market ceased operation due to competition from large markets now thriving in the neighbouring towns of Byron Bay and Bangalow. Land prices had increased ten-fold, limiting further land purchases to older and wealthier settlers who, while in sympathy with alternative thinking, came with every intention of working within conservative society.

It would be true to say that the communes never existed as more than an ideal. Certainly, there was communal ownership of the land and that remains the case today, but fairly rapidly all attempts at communal life such as living under the one roof and owning goods in common failed, as did communal farming. The prime reason for this is that, unlike the religious communes such as the kibbutz in Israel, none of the Mullumbimby communes had a central belief system that held people together through difficult times.

Compounding the problem was the hippie philosophy of 'peace and love' which dictated that one should and could live in perfect harmony with all people at all times. Thus when the inevitable differences of opinion arose, there was a denial of their existence. This left contentious matters to fester and finally explode into bitter divisions among community members. As well, the hope for independence from society had died with the



early realisation that it was not possible to entirely divorce oneself from bureaucratic structures:

'We discovered that you couldn't pay your rates by giving the local council half a dozen pawpaws.'

It would be a gross error, however, to consider the alternative movement a failure. Certainly, many aspects of the hippie dream have fallen by the wayside and there are casualties: people left drug-damaged and chronically unemployed. But all those early communes – now called multiple occupancies – still exist with many of the original settlers still resident, and several more communal properties have been established in the district since the '70s. While the people on today's multiple occupancies may not live under the one roof, nor till the fields together, there is a spirit of comradeship – of living in a supportive village community – that the common ownership of land inevitably engenders. Furthermore, there is a strong environmental consciousness and a high level of green activism in the district which has its seeds in the hippie philosophy of 'treading lightly on the earth'.

The legacy of the hippie days can be seen also in the colourful diversity of people attracted to the town of Mullumbimby. Artists, musicians, New Agers with their magic, and nose-ringed ferals (young recession victims rumoured to live in humpies in the state forests) mingle with the farming folk and those '70s hippies, now greying, with or without batik and beads in place, into middle-age. The Popular Café still does a good trade in tofu burgers and carrot juice; and your toasted cheese sandwiches, even in the more conservative cafés in town, come decorated with a handful of alfalfa sprouts.

And what of those hippies that came to hide in the hills and valleys to escape what they believed was the imminent collapse of society? Can we afford to snigger at their forebodings? When we look at the continuing ravaging of our environment and the social consequences of worldwide recession, might we not go some way towards agreeing with them when they say today:

'We were right. We just got the time frame wrong. It's all happening now.'

# FIXING UP A FERGIE

by Clive Colenso, Kingscote, SA.

**Many landowners rely on their faithful grey Fergie – an icon of country life.**

The photo shows my Fergie in use in my vineyard on Kangaroo Island. I have built the implement from recycled materials using a car 'floating' diff unit to drive Howard rotary hoe blades. The unit is called a vineyard weed and mulcher. Being offset to one side of the tractor, weeds and stubble are mounded up into the crop row with the lateral force being taken on a trailing arm and disc. A clutch operates on the PTO shaft angled at 20° off centre, with the diff unit set a further 5°. A counterweight is added for extra penetration.

I design and make my other implements (slasher, ripper and bucket arrangements), and have stripped down and refurbished the tractor motor – new liners and piston kits, crankshaft regrind, new clutch, new valve seat inserts (enables lower octane fuel to be used) – for a cost of \$1500. A job worth doing, because the cheapest new Fergie is listed at \$34,000!

I also overhauled the electrics, put in a second-hand regulator and replaced the key with a toggle switch. The engine components are 'Bepco' brand. I 'bedded in' the new bottom-end, using a welder switched to DC running on 48 volts and 130 amps, onto the starter motor until the oil in the bores was clean. I was told I was too fussy. It is worth paying someone



Clive designs and makes his own tractor implements and saves thousands of dollars by doing repair work on his faithful Fergie.

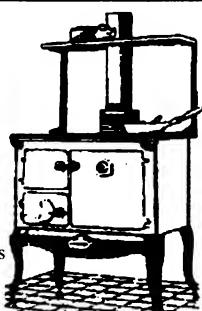
else to do the work if necessary. In this case the compressions were down by one-third, the plugs kept oiling up and excessive fuel was used. In time these costs will be more than made up with the savings in many areas – \$4 spent on a new distributor spindle bush is a

good start!

For more information contact: [clivecolenso@hotmail.com](mailto:clivecolenso@hotmail.com) Try also: [www.kangaroo\\_island\\_au.com](http://www.kangaroo_island_au.com) and scroll down to Emu Bay showing sailboat and vineyard. ¶

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# Livestock Health and Management

## Information You Need but Haven't Known Where to Ask

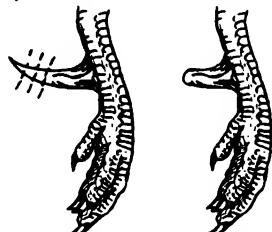
If you have queries on any type of livestock send them in and we'll get our panel of experts to research the problem for you. Send them to Livestock Advice Page, Grass Roots, PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

### ROOSTER'S SPURS

I have a couple of questions regarding chooks. Does anyone know the best way to cut a rooster's spurs? My rooster has spurs over 13 centimetres long, which now hamper him when he walks and may cause harm to the hens. I've hesitated over dealing with the problem, not knowing how to go about it, but it really needs some attention.

**J Farrar,  
KILKIVAN 4600.**

*The most humane way of dealing with a rooster's spurs is to trim the sharp end off with sheep nail clippers or pliers. Spurs are like toenails, they contain tiny capillaries carrying blood, plus the 'overgrown' section like a nail that can be trimmed off without pain or loss of blood. The ends of the spurs will be hard and dry and so require some effort to cut off. The only way is to cut small increments at a time, stopping before you reach the section that carries the capillaries. Smooth edges to a gently rounded shape with a coarse file. If the whole spur breaks off accidentally be prepared for copious bleeding, using either ice or a homoeopathic remedy like calendula to stem it.*



### EGG PROBLEMS

I have four New Hampshire X pullets. One has just started to lay, but her eggs have a real powdery taste to them and the shells are very thin. I feed them layers pellets, grass and all sorts of greens from our vegie garden. They also have a constant supply of shell grit. Am I doing something wrong?

**Lea Bowkett**

### UPPER CABOOLTURE 4510

*Hopefully, Lea, by the time you read this your pullet will have settled down and be producing large, well shaped, strong-shelled eggs. It takes time for a pullet's hormonal system to become organised; you will often find shell-less or soft-shelled eggs, or miniature or rather odd shaped ones in the first weeks of lay. The ration you're feeding and daily access to shell grit should aid the pullet to make the transition to a fully functioning egg producer. Consider sprinkling a pinch or two of kelp powder over feed once a week – it's an excellent hormonal tonic. The powdery flavour is unusual and more difficult to solve. Could nest litter have got wet and be mouldy? Check the hens' environment for a possible culprit. Try using a different type of nest litter, be very conscientious about storage of eggs. Could containers be at fault? Remember that shells are very porous and absorb the odours around them. Are you washing shells – soapy water will be drawn into the egg if water isn't hot enough. Finally, examine the greens you're feeding them, there may be a plant or*

*herb that is responsible. Do advise us of any improvement and what your sleuthing brings to light.*

### READERS' ANSWERS

In reply to questions in issue 149:

1. Mites in bran could be killed by placing bowls of bran in the microwave and zapping for a minute or so.
2. Diatomaceous earth is packaged as generic brand cat litter at some large supermarkets.

**Pam Williams,**

### WAGGA WAGGA 2650.

Regarding the enquiry about mites in bran, I was wondering if Robert had tried keeping containers of bran in the freezer for a few days prior to using, this should kill the mites. Thanks for a great magazine.

**R Kennedy,**

### CHINCHILLA 4413.

### MEALWORMS

Re: Robert Bishop and mealworms; it would be great if he can pass to us some information about mealworm breeding.

**Fred Bailey,**

### RESERVOIR 3073.

Can anyone help? Mealworms? What are these mealworms? I've seen them mentioned in pheasant articles and wondered if they would tempt my peachicks. Please – more information.

**Jim Smyth,**

### YEA 3717.



**Dr. Douglas Wilson**

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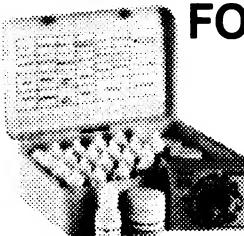
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# ECO NEWS

## GREEN ELECTRICITY

It is now possible for electricity consumers in NSW and Victoria to choose their electricity retailer. Other states are expected to follow. Under the new regulations it will be possible for consumers in one state to buy their electricity from a retailer in another state. The new regime is expected to encourage power companies to promote their 'green' credentials with a range of renewable energy options. Environmental groups have worked together to survey power providers on their green energy products and to collate and rank the replies. The survey showed that the best product was Green Earth Plus, available from Origin Energy, but only in Victoria at this stage. The highest ranking product available in NSW is Green Power from Australian Inland Energy and Water.

The full report is available from the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, ph: 02-9279-2466, or from their website: [www.nccnsw.org.au](http://www.nccnsw.org.au)

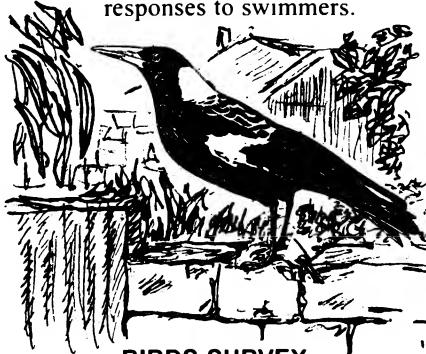
## DOLPHIN RESCUE

A female inshore Pacific bottlenose dolphin rescued by Sea World after having been caught on a shark drumline last September has been rehabilitated and returned to the wild. It took five months for the dolphin to recover from injuries caused by the hook penetrating her mouth and protruding under the eye. Rescuers believe that the dolphin will successfully reintegrate with her pod, known to have a home range along Gold Coast beaches.

A more recent rescue in late February involved a baby female dolphin believed to have been only days old when she became stranded on a beach near Ballina after the pod moved on. The dolphin was initially monitored around the clock with someone in the water with her at all times for support when she needed to rest. The next stage was to introduce the baby to an older female dolphin for suckling and companionship. With such a young animal a successful result is by no means taken for granted and in this case the baby did not survive.

Meanwhile, in Victoria the

Earthwatch Institute is undertaking research into the impact of ecotourism on the dolphin and seal populations in Port Phillip Bay. The study will examine tour operators' compliance with existing regulations regarding swimming with dolphins. Volunteers have assisted in collecting appropriate data, measuring distances from vessels to dolphins and monitoring dolphins' responses to swimmers.



BIRDS SURVEY

A Birds Australia survey of birds in suburban Sydney backyards has found that the most common bird found was the Indian mynah. The most common native species was the magpie, followed by the pied currawong and the noisy miner. One aim of the study was to investigate the relationships between large and small birds in gardens. The native noisy miner proved to be most negatively associated with small native species, with all seven small birds surveyed being less likely to frequent gardens where noisy miners were present.

## DISPOSABLE PLASTIC?

What is claimed to be the most advanced biodegradable plastic in the world has been developed by a Melbourne company. The product looks and feels like plastic, but is actually made from corn starch that disintegrates and disappears when exposed to water. There are huge potential markets both in Australia and overseas for this product to be used in biscuit and chocolate trays and to replace plastic shopping bags. Another market is in horticulture to replace the acres of plastic ground sheeting that end up in landfill each year. The corn starch product can be made strong enough to last for a growing season before disintegrating in moisture.

## SOLID WASTE TO ENERGY

Wollongong (NSW) is at the forefront of an alternative energy revolution. It has been the trial site of the first SWERF (Solid Waste To Energy Recycling Facility). The high-tech plant converts most of the waste from, ultimately, 240,000 households into enough electricity to power approximately 24,000 homes. In a unique three-stage process any reusable materials are recovered from the huge volumes of waste entering the system. All organic materials and packaging are converted to a high-quality gas, which is then used for power generation. Emission testing has verified the environmental benefits of this method over other waste processing options. The processing of 150,000 tonnes of waste, for example is expected to save 400,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases per year. Two other SWERFs have been commissioned so far for Australia, one in SA and one in WA, and another will be built in the UK.

## LOGGING REDUCTION FOR VIC

The Victorian government has recently announced a restructure of the timber industry that will see a reduction of 31 percent in logging across the state. A new independent report had found that levels of logging over the previous 10 years, based on flawed figures from the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, were unsustainable. Cutbacks are not equal across the board, with some areas retaining the status quo and others having reductions of 80 percent. Hundreds of jobs will be lost in the logging industry and affected workers are claiming that the \$80 million compensation package is insufficient.

Meanwhile, in Orbost loggers and conservationists have proven that, with good will on both sides, anything is possible. After years of division and conflict they have joined forces with local business people to form a plan to diversify the local economy so it will be less dependent on the logging industry. Alternatives being explored are tourism ventures and value-adding of low-grade timber. \*

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GR,

I don't know whether anyone else has thought of these; if so, not to worry. It is a useful **WATER-SAVING IDEA** that gets moisture down where it does most good, around the root area. It's only really useful with large individual plants, cabbages, caulies, eggplants, tomatoes etc. It should cost almost nothing, save perhaps a small bag of coconut fibre. One- or two-litre PET bottles are ideal. Cut out the base at a slight angle and drill a small hole in the cap, just enough for the water or liquid manure to trickle out slowly. Now stuff a small ball of the coconut fibre into the neck with a stick, this makes a good filter. The bottles are buried roughly 10 - 12 centimetres into the soil. This can be done before a seedling goes in, or after, with care, when the plant is half grown. For recyclers like me the bottles cost nothing - the litterbugs are happy to supply all your needs. Collect them from roadside verges or picnic areas. The bottles can be used over and over again, change or clean the filter when necessary. PET bottles are recyclable, but lots of them are simply tossed out of cars to eventually pollute creeks and coastal areas. Deep sea divers have found these bottles 2000 metres down on the sea bottom, so we need to find as many uses as we can for them. For shrubs and fruit trees we use the larger bleach bottles, although these aren't found by the roadside.

**A & P Stewart,**

12 Weymouth Pl, ALEXANDRA HILLS 4161.

## Dear GR & Readers,

Can anyone out there help me? A couple of years back I was given a recipe for making **GARLIC-BASED SPRAY** to be used in the garden to get rid of ants etc and also to spray on fruit trees. Unfortunately I've lost it. I would be grateful if anybody could supply me with any recipes they may have. Thank you.

**A R McDonald,**

8 Effra St, WISHART 4122.

*There are many variations on the garlic spray recipes. Try this one as general-purpose insecticide. Soak 90 grams chopped garlic in two tablespoons mineral oil (paraffin) for 24 hours. Add 600 ml water in which seven grams soap has been dissolved. Stir well. Strain through fine muslin. Store in a china or glass container (not metal). Dilute one part garlic mix to 50 parts water before spraying. Label container and store out of reach of children. For persistent pests try a stronger solution.*

## Dear Grass Roots,

I can't resist telling you how much I love your magazine and how inspiring it is. I'm a born and bred city girl, but, nearly two years ago, moved back to the area where my mother grew up. For the first few months I felt incredibly overwhelmed, and defeated in advance, by all the things that my boyfriend and I had simply never done before: cut wood, slay weeds, fix up sagging chook pens, dispose of dead animals, meet neighbours, garden according to seasons (Sydney doesn't really have 'em). Most of the things I read about in GR are still beyond me, even what most readers would consider basic, but I'm learning!

I have become slightly obsessed with a rather ambitious project: to transform our inground pool into a chemical-free one. I have done a bit of research and plan to build a pond or two up the slope from the pool, establish plants and fish, and pump the water through this 'biological filter' back into the pool. I have read a bit about **'FLOWFORMS'**. Has anyone had any experience with this sort of thing? Even just building a pond or equivalent watertight structure, preferably on a minuscule budget.

**Lucy Lehmann,**

PO Box 247, COWRA 2794.

Anonymous letters will not be published. Please indicate if you would like personal details to be withheld. 

## Dear GR Readers,

I am a keen gardener as well as a mad fisherman. To satisfy my bait needs, as well as making my own compost, I am endeavouring to have suitable worms in my composting bins. Although I have **MILLIONS OF SMALL WORMS**, I do not seem to be able to make them grow to any size. I bought a book on worms, but I still seem to be unsuccessful. Hoping someone can give me the answer to my problem.

**150th  
Celebration**

**Geoff Hancock,  
41 Glencoe St, KENNINGTON 3550.**

## Dear Editor,

I have been trying to track down **SILKWORMS** for my grandson, with no success. As we have two mulberry trees we have the food, but not the worms.

**Peter Ganfield,  
PO Box 84, DWELLINGUP 6213.**

## Dear GR & Readers,

Hello! Wow, what can I say? I have just discovered GR and I am finding it so interesting and refreshing! I am originally from the USA, but I have been here, in Australia, for 2½ years.

Recently, my husband and I bought a beach house in the Mackay area. It is a weekend getaway for now. I am a hopeless gardener 'wannabe' and I was hoping someone would be able to offer me some information about what plants I could grow without much tending in this tropical region. Also for my weekday home, I would like to know what plants would grow in a sandy, very hot, very dry region.

Thank you again for your wonderful magazine and for putting me in touch with like-minded people!

Since I enjoyed the two issues I got from the local library so much, I went back and got all of last year's issues as well. I am finding them so enjoyable, however, a lot of things are new to me and I have heaps of questions I would like to ask!

I would like to know if someone could please tell me **HOW TO GROW LAVENDER** and what climate it grows well in. I would also like to know how to make/get lavender oil from the plant.

Is anyone else here attempting to **HOME SCHOOL HIS OR HER ADD/ADHD son**? Is it going well? What 'system' works best for you? My 10-year-old son was diagnosed with ADD about three years ago. Is there an alternative/herbal supplement to Ritalin? If you have any information on this as well I would be interested to hear from you!

What is a 'dig free' or 'dig less' garden?

Also, in some of the recipes that I have been reading I have noticed that it says to put the finished item in sterilised jars. But then what do you do?

Also does anyone know of a vegetable called **OKRA**? My mother used to grow it for us in the US, but I haven't seen it here in Australia and very few people know what it is. If you have information on how to grow it here, or seed, I would appreciate anything you would be willing to offer. I am willing to buy the seeds if you like.'

I would love to have a pen pal. I am a married mom of three boys, 10 and 7 years and 10 months, and looking to get back to nature and be partially self-sufficient as a goal. Also, I have a two-year-old lemon and white male Beagle, Mr Bean, who is looking to sow his oats. If anyone has a female Beagle that they would like puppies from, please feel free to contact me! Thanks again and looking forward to hearing from any one of you soon!

**Busy Aussie Mom,  
PO Box 250, MORANBAH 4744.**

*A lot of the information you are after has been published in previous issues of GR. Okra: GR123, no-dig gardening: GRs 93, 90, 82; bottling: GR83. Also, Esther Deans' famous no-dig gardening book has recently been rereleased by HarperCollins Publishers.*

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK



Dear GR Friends,

Some of you will remember me writing about the **BIG CATS THAT ARE ENDEMIC** in Australia and asking for information regarding sightings. Well, I received letters from all over Australia and also some people dug up my phone number to call in person. During this past year I had two specimens of juvenile big cats given to me. Unfortunately, they were mistaken for feral cats and had been donged on the head. Specimens of tissue were sent to a laboratory for DNA analysis and the results showed that they were genetically identical to the domestic cat *Felis catus*, except that the DNA also contained two unknown genes.

These unknown genes are apparently the culprits that have made Tiddles grow to the size of large pumas, and exhibit an intelligence rating that would put the puma in the kindy class. As stock killers they exhibit traits that are common to both puma and leopard and also some of their own, such as eating from a victim while it is still alive. Fortunately, they are generally not aggressive towards humans unless a person is in the vicinity of kittens, but give them time.

Cats have been in Australia for a long long time. East Mediterranean seamen visited Australia about three and a half thousand years ago. How do we know? They left their calling cards carved in stone in a script that has been identified as proto Caannanite which was in vogue at the time of the Queen of Sheba. It is written on an ancient temple wall in Lower Sudan that she had a fleet of ships built and sent them out to discover the world, manned by Phoenicians. This script can be found worldwide, including Australia, America, Europe and China. It is probable that these people carried cats and some were liberated or escaped, and, back in the mists of time, a female cat got her genes in a tangle and produced a litter of kittens that were mutants. These in turn interbred and have since populated Australia. Can anyone come up with a better explanation?

To date, my efforts to have these unknown genes investigated have come to naught. Here I am handing out a biological miracle on a plate, or rather in a vial, but no one is interested.

The other day I heard a fellow on the radio extolling the virtues of GM grains, and one of the virtues was resistance to herbicide. I bet he got his fingers smacked for saying that, or in this day was he counselled.

Wally Davies,  
CMB PARACHILNA 5730.

Dear Editor,

Do you have any tips on **HALTER TRAINING COWS**? We have both adult cows and calves, and calves on the way, which would be easier to rotate between paddocks if they could be led.

Taria Sloan,

240 Yellowbox Rd, THE ANGLE 2620.

*It would possibly be easier to train your cows to follow you if you are carrying a bucket of grain.*

Dear Megg & Friends,

Thank you for printing my letter in issue 146. I had many replies. Many I replied to, some I wasn't able to. If you have room in one of your publications, could you please print a thank-you to Jane and Jenny of NSW who suggested a herbal book to help with arthritis, also Bob Winterburn of Townsville.

Would readers share their recipes for **BEEF JERKY**? I have two sons who love the stuff, but at nearly \$3 a piece it is becoming expensive to buy.

H Leach,  
202 Rocky Crossing Rd, ALBANY 6330.

Dear Megg & Co,

Last night, as I was pouring nicely melted sheep fat into butter containers at 3am (well this morning then), I composed a wonderful newsy letter to bring you up to date with things here – so now I'll have a go at remembering some of it. Obviously, I am still making soap (that's what the fat is for) and, yes, I'm still spinning and even knitting too, and I am still living in my little homemade shack on the beach. The sand mine has faded into the distant future, but now the government wants to demolish our one and only fishing jetty – the one I can see from my kitchen window. We have rejected their demolition application and now we have to convince them to fix it. It is the source of most of my meals these days. I have a wonderfully exotic neighbour who fishes squid and the occasional salmon and then even cooks it for me. She is slowly reading all my back copies of GR and wants to try everything. The latest is chooks and we have a lot of laughs at their antics. She beams with such joy at the basket of fresh brown eggs and we often say how rich we feel.

Tomorrow is my one big day a week – in town (Currie), music (piano) lessons to give; leavers' ball rehearsals with one music group and concert band rehearsals after that. My students have a concert in two weeks and there are all sorts of end-of-year and Christmas do's to perform and go to in the next month. And so another year will be gone. Our concert band did a bus tour to Alice Springs in the September holidays and it was a great experience. I lived there for awhile 30 years ago and a lot has changed since then, but the country is still magnificent.

I've learned a bit about computers and photos during the year, but the death of my old 12-volt laptop is still a bit of a blow – the typewriter is just not the same.

I'm trying a small patch of vegies again and things look good at present, but it is all barricaded about to stop wallabies and possums getting them first. The wallabies are so lovely – lots of joeys this year and all eating grass now, but the **POSSUMS** are just a jolly nuisance – as you well know! My experience with Possoff was something else. They broke into boxes and cupboards to get at it and bit and chewed the bottle to bits. They even ripped open a container of pepper I had to put with carrot seeds! I hope it got right up their noses. But they still climb up on to the roof almost every night.

My old gas fridge has been ailing so I disconnected it and put it on a trolley to take it for a bit of a dance around the garden and shake up the liquid a bit. I hope that might give it a second lease on life. Gas is sooooo expensive now it hardly seems worth using it, but my solar system is too small to cope with what the fridge would drain. Seems crazy to think I might have to consider using powdered milk so I don't need a fridge. Then again, our new UHT plant might be operating soon . . . just a shame I hate the taste.

Robyn,  
RSD 119, Naracoopa, KING ISLAND 7256.

Dear GR,

I would like to begin making kefir again, but unfortunately the **KEFIR LIVE STARTER** I had stored was disposed of by an unknowing guest who thought it was off. If anyone knows where I can obtain some live kefir grains to culture, or if anyone has some to spare, I would be glad to hear from them.

Margaret,  
82 Terrace Rd, GUILDFORD 6055.

*A kefir culture product is reviewed in this edition's Round the Market Place.*

Dear GR Readers,

I am looking into making **HOMEMADE SOAPS** to sell on stalls and wonder if it is possible to make soap **WITHOUT USING CAUSTIC SODA** (sodium hydroxide), and preferably to make the soap with all natural ingredients. If anyone can help with any recipes I would be very grateful. I would also like a recipe for sensitive skins.

Betty Weir,  
Box 126, BARMERA 5345.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GRs,

The response to my request for **EYE EXERCISES** has been ongoing. My apologies to those people whose letters I haven't answered yet. I know now that I am a member of a wonderful family – the *Grass Roots* family.

**Doug Spence,  
PO Box 32, BULLFINCH 6484.**

## Dear Megg & Mary,

With regard to **BIODIESEL**: Being very interested in the subject, but unfortunately computer illiterate, I enlisted the aid of my younger brother in Brisbane who is a computer whiz. Today I received some 30 A4 pages of computer printout on the subject. The easiest process to follow is the biodiesel recipe from Mike Pelly (13 pages) available from the 'Journey to Forever' website.

The book, *From Fryer to Fuel Tank* is available through Fast Books, 16 Darghan Street, Glebe, NSW 2037. Ph: 02-9692-0166, fax: 02-9552-4320, email: [info@fastbooks.com.au](mailto:info@fastbooks.com.au)

I trust the above info will be useful to other readers willing to experiment. With the price of diesel (fossil) currently at 93.9 cents per litre in Cooktown, I certainly hope to have my tractor running on biodiesel in the foreseeable future.

**John de Lange,  
'Hanamoa', PO Box 157, COOKTOWN 4871.**

## Dear Editor,

My name is Julia Tichy and I live in Stuttgart, Germany. I am 19 years old and I have a driver's license. I would like to go to Australia as an au pair girl for one year beginning in August/September 2002. This year I am preparing for my final graduation exams (A-levels) and after my graduation I would like to gain some experiences abroad and I would also like to improve my English. Because of this I am looking for a family (preferably with younger children) who is willing to welcome myself for **ONE YEAR AS AN AU PAIR GIRL**. Here in Germany I've already worked a lot with children. I worked as a babysitter for neighbours and friends and I also took care of children at local events and seminars and also camps. I am looking forward to receiving mail from you.

**Julia Tichy,  
Scottweg 68, 70439 STUTTGART, GERMANY.  
Email: [t.julia@freenet.de](mailto:t.julia@freenet.de)**

## Dear GR,

Leafing through some old GRs recently, GR123 of late 1997, a letter drew my interest. It was by Stephen Walton of Clayfield, Qld and promoted an organisation called **NATURE**. Unfortunately, neither Stephen nor Nature are now known at the address. I would be very interested to hear from him, or the organisation, as I believe their ideas are even more relevant today.

**Doug Blackwell,  
Merriwa Rd, GUNGAL 2333.**

## Dear GR & Readers,

Thank you for a great magazine. I am writing in the hope that someone may be able to help me find a book I've been looking for for a long time. The book is '**AUSTRALIAN RAINFOREST TREES**', by W D Francis. It is an old book and I've not been able to find a copy anywhere. Is there a GR reader who has a copy of this book that they don't need anymore? If so, I am willing to pay something for it and cover postage. If someone has a copy to sell, please write and let me know. Keep up the good work GR and all the readers who send in such wonderful information.

**H Sonne,  
PO Box 70, TEWANTIN 4565.**



Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published.

## To GRs,

I am dropping a line to apologise to anyone who answered our letter about **CHRONIC PAIN**, in GR148. We have moved. Our new address is 55 Hilary St, Mt Isa, Qld 4825. We have had a few problems with our mail redirection. We have not received anything from this address.

I have just recovered from an attack of shingles which left me drained and my RSD flared up quite a lot during this time. I did manage to keep it under control quite well without resorting to the pain killers.



**Ray & Terry,  
55 Hilary St, MT ISA 4825.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

It's a long time since I wrote, but I just can't afford to buy the magazine any longer – I read it at the library instead. If a chap named Patrick from some place around Sydney is reading this, my apologies for not answering your letter. At that time I was dithering regarding moving to Tasmania but, with another Perth summer in front of me, have definitely decided to make the move. My general plan at the moment is to get to Victoria for the fruit picking season which will give me a bit of money to **LOOK AROUND TASMANIA** to decide where I'd like to live and have my four-legged family sent to. I truly feel as though I'm moving to a new country. All my gardening ideas are going to have to change, and the bliss of being able to water more than twice a week! That's all we're allowed at present. If anyone should know of an inexpensive place to rent or buy, animals welcome, house-sit, caretake, whatever, please let me know. On the north or east coast of Tasmania. While I hate the heat, I'm not that keen on freezing.

**Pat Lever,  
26 Byers Rd, MIDLAND 6056.**

## Dear Grass Roots,

We enjoy reading your magazines and, like many, look forward to each edition that comes out. It's a change to read a magazine that isn't full of ads, and is packed with heaps of info. A great effort! I am 36 years of age and have just recently been diagnosed with arthritis. Do any readers have any information (other than fish oil tablets and books recommended by Arthritis Association of Victoria) on **ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES** that have been tried and tested that may help. I'm a new GR reader and may have missed any previous information, but will gladly hear from others.

**Sonya Otway,  
PO Box 18, ROCKHAMPTON 4700.**

## Dear GR,

Can anybody write to us and tell us if they have had any success with purchasing land or house and land on **VENDOR'S TERMS**? How did you find your home? Were there any hidden costs? Basically, the pros and cons of it. It all sounds too easy to me.

Could any readers share with us some **RECIPES FOR DIFFERENT VEGIES**, especially tomatoes – such as tomato sauce, paste, anything really? We have gone a bit overboard with our vegie garden. All our friends in the suburbs think this is great. Thanks for a great magazine which has helped us out many times over the past year.



**Lea Bowkett,  
200 Tinney Rd, UPPER CABOOLTURE 4510.**



## Dear GR People,

I would like to know if there is someone who could send me a recipe for **CAPE GOOSEBERRY JAM**, and if craft-minded people would like to share their craft ideas with me? I would like crafts that are suitable for gift giving and selling on a market stall. I would be very obliged.

**Dot Everson,  
29 Avoca Rd, TINTINHULL, KOOTINGAL 2352.**

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GRs,

Could anyone having information on **EARTH OVENS AND CLAY BEEHIVES** contact me?

William Solomons,  
5 TJ Ryan Ave, COLLINGWOOD PARK 4301.  
Email: williamsolomons@hotmail.com



## Dear Readers,

I have recently renewed my subscription to GR as I was a subscriber for many years in the past and thoroughly enjoyed the magazine. I am hoping a fellow reader might remember a recipe for an **ALL-PURPOSE DOMESTIC CLEANER** (works especially well on carpet stains). I think the recipe was in an issue approximately ten years ago. I remember that the base of the recipe was Lux flakes. If anyone knows the recipe I would greatly appreciate it if you could get in touch with me.

Claude McKee,  
M/S 189, KINGAROY 4610.  
Email: magoo@ion.com.au  
*Cleaning recipes have been in GRs 106, 118, 134.*

## Hello All Grass Rooters,

Hands up everyone who agrees that this sanity saving magazine should be published at least monthly? Everyone? Yes, that's what I thought! As for me, I try to spin out the reading to last the two months, but usually I devour the whole lot in one sitting, then I'm on tenterhooks waiting for the next one!

Some years ago I was dealt a mind- and life-shattering revelation to cope with. For four years I nearly didn't cope, but the last few months I have started pulling the loose ends together and putting in place ideas that hopefully will enable me to create a new life, using my long-held beliefs of sustainability. *Grass Roots* has played a large part in helping me to get through these last few years, just being there, always reaching out to help others. I do have two requests. The first is a copy of Juliette de Bairacli Levy's *Herbal Handbook for Farm & Stable* – does anyone have a copy I can buy? The other request is for information. I think I would like to **MOVE TO TASMANIA**, but having never been there, know nothing about the different types of land. I will be wanting to sell fat cattle, so am interested in areas with a consistent rainfall to sustain good quality native pasture all year, without necessarily having to plant crops to use for grazing. Not completely flat land and not all mountainous, but enough area to carry, say 30 – 40 breeders or grass eaters. Should I be looking at the north-east and north-west corners? If anyone has a property with a dwelling and outside infrastructure suited to my needs and they would like to exchange (in part) with my farm in south-east Queensland – Warwick area – let me know. I have 142 acres with two houses, irrigation and long creek boundary. I will answer all letters.

Geraldine Dennis,  
PO Box 67, YANGAN 4371.

## Dear GR & Readers,

I'm writing in the hope that a reader can help me – I'm part of a young family with two girls, 3 and 6, and another due in April. Our lease also runs out in April, and we are hoping to find another rental, preferably on acreage or in a small, friendly community out bush somewhere. I would like to start a large vegetable garden for produce to barter with, and my wife wants to begin her herb garden to produce her own supplies as a naturopath. Our time is running out, and we would appreciate any replies with details of something similar to what we are looking for. If anyone can help us achieve our dream, please phone 07-4921-1515 any time. Thank you for your time.

Ricky Andrews,  
1/222 Agnes St, ROCKHAMPTON 4700.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I recently began reading GR and feel inspired and touched by the genuine care the readers seem to have for each other and the earth. Having lived all my 33 years in Sydney, this is not something I am well acquainted with. Anyway, my partner and I have decided that this is what life should be and are wondering if anyone has any suggestions for good places for us, and our two kids, to live. We are interested in **FINDING OUT ABOUT COMMUNITIES** but also about towns that are community minded. I guess we are looking for like-minded people (isn't everyone?). This is our list: alternative schools or a network of home-schoolers, permaculture philosophy, some prospect of employment (we both currently work with adults with intellectual and physical disabilities doing painting, bookmaking and living skills), privacy and community. We look forward to any information that anyone can give and will very much appreciate any responses. Thanks.

150th  
Celebration



150th  
Celebration



Robyn Moloney,  
320A Enmore Rd, MARRICKVILLE 2204.

## Dear Megg & Team,

Could any readers please help me. I need all the information I can get on traps and trapping and any other method of **DESTROYING FERAL CATS**. On our block we have blue wrens, silvereyes, willy wagtails and many other birds. There are also lizards and geckos. I would like to keep it this way. These cats are definitely feral, our nearest neighbour is six kilometres away.

Dave & Maree,  
PO Box 595, AMERICAN RIVER 5221.

## Dear GRs,

Has anybody heard of a book called '**SUGAR BLUES**'? I do not know the author or publisher and it is not a recent book. My husband has diabetes and I heard that the information in this book will help him. I will gladly pay for the book and postage.

Margaret J Kerle,  
C/- PO Box 784, NIGHTCLIFF 0814.

## Dear Megg & Mary,

Thank you for a wonderful magazine. I would like to try **GROWING ASPARAGUS** and would welcome any letters from readers who could send me a few crowns or advise me where I could get them from. I will gladly pay for any costs involved.

Cynthia Williamson,  
MS 2217, BUNDABERG 4670.

## Dear GR,

I am writing to see if you can put me in touch with people who make their own **HOME MADE SMALLGOODS**, ie: wurst, salami and other products. When I was in my childhood we used to do our own home slaughtering in conjunction with our neighbouring farmers. One family of neighbours was of European descent; they used to make their own smallgoods and often we would receive smallgoods as a gift, or they would make a bulk supply as we would supply half of the meat products. I am now in my mid 50s and in semi-retirement. Try as I may I can't get onto any recipes.

In a previous GR magazine one reader wanted a **BRINE RECIPE** for corned meat. I have recently uncovered such a recipe but have mislaid that issue of GR. I could supply the recipe if I had their address.

Also, could anyone supply me with information on using the juice from **BOILED RHUBARB LEAVES** as an insecticide or spray for my vegetable patch? Request from a dedicated GR reader.

Ollie Mason,

236 Sandy Pt Rd, SALAMANDER BAY 2317.

*There was a series of articles, from GR135 to GR140, on making sausages. These articles could be what you are looking for. The author of the articles has a booklet available for \$10. Write to: Lucy Daugalis, 18 Rockville Ave, Daw Park 5041.*

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GR,

There are still a few 'free lunches', one being **FREE COMPUTERS FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**, and I am sure the proposed Goldfields LETSystem around Maldon would be a candidate. For the technically well heeled who already have computers, go to: [www.noie.gov.au/projects/access/online\\_access/subsidised\\_comp.htm](http://www.noie.gov.au/projects/access/online_access/subsidised_comp.htm) It gives a list of organisations providing free computers and the states in which they operate. Victoria and the ACT seem to be the ones best served.

There are other ways of acquiring goods and services without dollars. As a member of a LETSystem I 'bought' a 486 DX computer from another member for warras (our local currency) and donated this to Technical Aid to the Disabled to be modified for a disabled or elderly person, something which I would not have been able to do if dollars had been involved. I am now trawling the LETSystem for more manual typewriters and manual or treadle sewing machines in good working order to send to East Timor where there is still no electricity in most places, and only at certain times in others. Teachers in Remexio were hand-writing test papers one at a time until the Kangaroo Valley - Remexio Partnership was able to send them some manual typewriters. One of the problems was acquiring fabric typewriter ribbons for those typewriters, but I have found a source and the vendor has donated the first five ribbons.

From time to time I notice enquiries in GR letters asking for the address of a LETSystem in a particular area. For those with access to a computer, go to: [www.lets.org.au](http://www.lets.org.au) which has links to websites and email addresses for some of the systems throughout Australia, and a comprehensive list of Queensland and Victorian systems.

I am now compiling a list of NSW LETSystems for the same site. Using old typed and computer lists from the 1990s, I have emailed and/or written to about 60 NSW LETSystems at their last known address. Some of the email addresses are no longer valid, and Australia Post is returning unclaimed letters every day, so only some of the systems are still operating. It is proving more time consuming than I had hoped, but there will eventually be a list of operating NSW LETSystems on that website. It will also be interesting to ascertain which systems failed and why, for the benefit of operating or new systems. From this I shall also have a list of defunct systems which will get a decent burial until some enterprising souls might decide to resurrect some of them. If any GR reader belongs to an operating NSW LETSystem, I would be pleased to have details for the new list, and, as a matter of interest, details of any defunct systems for the LETS cemetery.

Someone wanted a LETSystem in/near Cessnock NSW. Contact Hunter LETS - 177 members and growing. Contact Dee Abrahall, ph/fax: 02-4991-2610, or email her on: [abrahall@earth.net](mailto:abrahall@earth.net)

**CLOTH NAPPIES:** WHEN (Worldwide Home Environmentalist Network), PO Box 2284, Camberwell 3124, ph: 03-9877-4965, or email: [when@vicnet.net.au](mailto:when@vicnet.net.au) produces a leaflet titled 'The art of cloth nappies' and their suggested laundry options are listed below. They have left out what I consider the first step, ie, scrape off the faeces.

- Soak overnight in borax and add a few drops of eucalyptus oil for a fresher smell. Wring out and wash in washing machine.
- Soak overnight with three tablespoons of bicarb of soda. Wash in machine and add one tablespoon of vinegar in deep rinse.
- Soak in bleach - use oxygen-based bleach such as Neon. Follow the instructions on the box. The use of bleach can be avoided. Hot water and sun will keep nappies white.
- It is an option to soak in plain water or grey water saved from a previous non-nappy wash or the water from the rinse cycle.
- Always dry nappies in the sun if possible. You can also hang them on the clotheshorse and sit them over a heating duct. Wrap a sheet around the clotheshorse to act as a mini dryer.

**HEADLICE:** The use of vinegar is not recommended. It was a woman doctor who found the simplest way of eradication. Smother

the hair thoroughly in hair conditioner and leave on for several hours (not days). This asphyxiates the lice (smothers them). Comb out and then wash the hair as usual. Repeat with every infestation. A nit comb should be part of the bathroom equipment in any house with school children and should be used on a daily basis. I believe the best are \$12 from Coles and are much prized in East Timor.

P Ferguson,

65 Cotterill Ave, WOONONA 2517.

Email: [pferguson@earth.net](mailto:pferguson@earth.net)

*Well done Penny. Any other readers with manual typewriters or sewing machines they could donate to East Timor? Contact Penny to find out how to go about it.*

Hi All,

I am a 22-year-old second generation reader with a gap of about eight years. Along with my young family (Barry 24 and Josh 2½), I am wanting a more meaningful existence. I am starting to look at self-sufficiency, although we aren't able to live in the country, so I am doing it the backyard way. If anyone has information, ideas or stories, please feel free, or if you just want to drop a line. I also have two little requests, any help with these would be great. I am looking for: **RUSSIAN GIANT SUNFLOWER SEEDS** (for Josh), **CAPE GOOSEBERRY ONES** (for me). Also, if anyone has any plans for an easy cheap food dehydrator, hoping you can help. Hope everyone was kept safe from the fires.

Sarah Coull,

46 MacKenzie Blvd, SEVEN HILLS 2147.

Email: [sparki\\_c@iprimus.com.au](mailto:sparki_c@iprimus.com.au)

## Dear Grass Roots,

Thank you for writing to me and sending me the address of those seed savers. I want you to know that I sent them seeds straight away. In my last letter I told you that I had written to Phoenix Seeds, New Gippsland Seeds and the Diggers Club. The only one who wanted the seeds was Phoenix, so I obliged and got back an acknowledgement. I took a lot of seeds to a local nursery and found that he used to grow **TONGUE LETTUCE** years ago for private use and he told his staff who were present how good a lettuce it was. He was glad to take the seeds and that means it won't be long before the public can buy it in punnets. When I sent seeds away I asked that I be informed how they did and I was happy to get two cards just before Christmas. The first was from Rosa and she thanked me and said how yummy the lettuce was and that she was letting three or four go to seed. The other card was from Wayne and he told me that he planted all the seeds and ate all the lettuce and would like more seeds. He said that maybe he would sacrifice one plant and let it go to seed. I wrote to Rosa and told her that she had made one 82-year-old man happy.

Sorted through my mail and kept about 40 letters and thought that I would send them a note to see how they got on with the lettuce. The Post Office returned one of the letters that I had sent and it was marked 'uncollected mail'. The address was: Yumeya Gardens, Rasa & Mangal, Lot 2, Repentance Creek Rd, Federal 2480.

Anyone else want any tongue lettuce seeds as I'm still collecting them?

Robert Winterburn,

8 Loves Lne, ROSSLEA, TOWNSVILLE 4812.

The efficacy and/or safety of advice on these pages cannot be guaranteed. Readers are urged to take all common-sense precautions before undertaking any procedures that could possibly cause a safety risk to themselves or others. When in doubt, consult an expert. ☺

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear Megg & Mary,

I am after the **AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS FOR HOME-MADE MUDBRICKS**. Like so many before me, I admit to having been a 'closet' reader of GR for many years. Never got around to subscribing mind you, but grab the magazine whenever I see it and read it cover to cover in one sitting if I can get away with it. I am writing because I hope that some kind GR soul will be able to provide me with advice on mudbricks.

My father bought a book about mudbrick building when I was about 12 years old, and at 57 I still hanker after a mudbrick home. No idea what happened to the first book, but that gives you some idea of how impressed I was with the concept. I have quite a library of modern mudbrick books today, but none of them provide the advice I now seek.

With retirement in my sights, and my 10½ acre block just begging for me to begin using the beautiful red clay, I have run up against 'authority' in the form of the local building inspector, a helpful and courteous young man who candidly admits he has never seen a mudbrick house being built. He nevertheless has stated that he cannot approve the building without being assured that the bricks themselves meet the Australian Standard by the production of a certificate to this effect. This, apparently, I must obtain, but he can offer no advice about the source of such a certificate.

As I want to make the bricks using my own resources and then lay them myself. I am somewhat stumped. I am aware that mudbricks complete with certification can be purchased, but this defeats my purpose for this particular stretch of land. Anyway, it wouldn't be my mudbrick house, now would it? Nor would imported bricks sit well with the land. I might as well use concrete blocks. To give you some idea of the plan of operation, it is intended to remove (and save) the topsoil from the area designated for a swimming pool, with the clay to be then stockpiled in heaps. This will allow the mixing of clay from different levels, ensuring all bricks and mortar are as closely as possible prepared of the same material. No straw will be used, bricks will be formed with pressure rather than puddled, and will therefore be quite dense.

Both internal and external walls are to be laid in the 'English bond' style on concrete piers. These walls will not be load bearing, as the roof will go up first on steel posts and beams. Steel is not my choice but, as the area has voracious termites, it is a must. This is also the reason for omitting straw from the bricks. Manufacturing and curing will take place under cover of the roof. Bricks will be formed in a size and shape to make them easy to handle and lay in the chosen pattern.

I intended to have large floor to roofline windows in the living areas, with the external walls protected by a three-metre wide verandah on all four sides of the house – it gets very hot and wet in Far North Queensland. Floors will, unfortunately, be concrete poured on a thick bed of roadbase, again because of the voracious monsters mentioned earlier.

After all these years of waiting, I hate to give up my dream when it is so close, just because of a technicality. I would appreciate any comments, advice, or just letters from people who have been down this road before me and managed to get around similar technicalities. Thank you for a great magazine, I have learnt much.

Darryl Mulgrue (Ms),  
43 Wiseman Rd, EDMONTON 4869.

Health tips are printed for readers' information and interest. *Grass Roots* staff, and most Feedback writers, are not qualified to offer specific advice for the treatment of serious medical conditions. Readers are urged to always consult a qualified practitioner of the desired modality. \*

## Dear Grass Roots,

This letter is for Louise (GR148). I have a very good recipe for **STRETCH MARKS** that has been trialled and tested. I myself have not had children and am only 20, but three years ago I had my growth spurt and grew in height, just under 30 centimetres in a year, consequently leaving stretches in my upper thigh area. Even on the tough skin of the thighs this recipe works, so it should work well on your belly and breasts also.

Take ½ cup virgin olive oil; ¼ cup aloe vera gel; 6 capsules vitamin E, cut open; 4 capsules vitamin A, cut open. Mix all ingredients in a blender. Store in a jar in the fridge. Once a day apply with a gentle massaging movement to problem areas, but discontinue on breasts once breast feeding. You must be diligent with this every day. Alternatively, you could use cocoa butter which is also very good.

Anna,  
Queensland.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I am writing to you in the hope of finding out where I might get a good, concise **PRESERVING BOOK**. I have tried many book stores, second-hand shops etc, to no avail. If you could help my search in any way, I would be very appreciative. I can only hope you know of someone who sells preserving kits or books.

Anna Woodhouse,  
PO Box 106, TOOGOOLAWAH 4313.

## Dear GR Friends,

Like so many others, I've read and enjoyed in silence your very good magazine, so many versatile people sharing their knowledge freely, or just writing interestingly. The number of topics dealt with is surprising, which makes GR something to look forward to. I, for one, can't get enough of it. There's always at least several things I've been wanting an answer to.

The cheap chook house in the current edition prompted me to describe my 'invention'. Having four bored chooks and a rooster, I purchased a wooden cot from a local op shop, cut the legs off, covered the sides and top with mesh, and 'put it out to grass'. Put in water dish and a scattering of grain, and, last but not least, the chooks. Slats in the bottom prevent the chooks from scratching, but they get the grain and grass between the slats. Cot (pen?) is light and easily moved, grass is kept short and fertilised, the eggs plentiful, with good yolk colour, chooks lay more and are no longer bored.

Now to my requests for help. Does anyone know **ERIC NEAL**, who attended Devon Meadows State School in the thirties? My brother Owen saw him in Wagga Wagga (he thinks) about thirty years ago. Eric said he was market gardening in the area. He was very popular at school, especially for his good humour and contagious laugh. We would very much like to contact him.

As the years roll on, so does the arthritis and stiff joints. This is particularly painful and frustrating when trying to connect hose attachments. We all know about softening the end of the hose with boiling water, but what about holding that hot hose while trying to insert the attachment? It would be great if some clever person invented an attachment with an insert that worked on the same principle as the hose joiners, with the part to be inserted of a smaller diameter than the hose, and with a screw-on piece to hold it there, obviating burnt fingers and cursing, and unjoined attachments. Please help, brainy people.

Have heard of knitters needed to make jackets for oil-soaked penguins, but have been unable to get patterns or an address. Knitting is good for arthritic fingers – I do it all the time. I knit coats for dogs in the local RSPCA. Lastly, can anyone please tell me where to get **BLACK MUSCOVY DUCKS**, preferably in the Bundaberg area?

J Ridley-Ward,  
7 Hay St, AVENELL HEIGHTS,  
BUNDABERG 4670.

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GR,

Would anyone have some seeds of the South American tonic known as **MACA**? Also what is its botanical title? I was talking to a GR reader from Peru who was amazed to learn that maca is not well known in Australia. A website is: [www.cipotato.org/projects/artc.htm](http://www.cipotato.org/projects/artc.htm) There may be others, and some research has been done at Peruvian University at Cayetano Heredia by Dr Fernando Cabieses. Maca has been a medicinal root for thousands of years in South America.



Does anyone know of a supply of **VERY LARGE OLD TYRES** from dump trucks used in open-cut mines? They don't need to be reusable as tyres, but good enough to hold water. I'm building some water tanks with them.

Roberino,  
Lot 4, ARRAWARRA BEACH 2456.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I would like to know if anyone has a copy of the **FOWLER'S VACOLA** preserving unit booklet they might be able to copy for me. I have the unit where you place a thermometer in the side. I need the booklet to know what temperature it needs to be to preserve the goods.

Tracy Emerson,  
149 Northcote St, BRIGHTON 4017.

## Dear Grass Roots,

Do any readers have any old **PRESERVE RECIPES**? I collect them and would be happy to swap some of mine. I also do marinades, eggplant and asparagus.

Could anyone tell me if there are any recipes for chocolate pudding fruit? I have had it with ice cream and it was delicious. I have tried to grow it in Victoria with no success.

Always bottling.

Jude Watson,  
25 Clarence St, LOCH 3945.

## Dear Megg & Staff,

I would be extremely grateful if any of your wonderful readers have any information on the condition commonly called **RESTLESS LEG SYNDROME**. I lead a pretty busy life and finally when I do get to bed, my legs are so restless – even painful in the calf area – that I actually have trouble sleeping. It can take hours sometimes before my legs settle. A naturopath I consulted suggested I was probably low in folic acid and magnesium, but after taking these diligently for some time there has been no change in my condition. It appears the condition is fairly common – many people have told me they can't help because they also suffer. I would be extremely grateful for any help I could be given.

Andrea Sage,  
C/- PO Box 294, WALLSEND 2287.

*A few years ago there was some correspondence through Feedback on this topic. Remedies suggested then included: rubbing the cut area of half a lemon on the affected limb, drinking a glass of tonic water per day (for the quinine), taking 400 – 1600 mg vitamin E per day. Did anyone try these? Did they work?*

## Dear GRs,

Has anyone a copy of CSIRO's magazine on science and the environment, **ECOS**, number 40, probably printed late 1980s? Ecos is no longer in operation and the magazine is now out of print. Should you not care to part with your copy, I am willing to pay for the photocopying of same, plus postage of course. Or should you be happy to loan it to me, I give my word that I shall return it to you within a couple of days, or you might like to ring me on 03-6372-2418.

P M O'Donnell,  
11 Gardiners Creek Rd, ST MARYS 7215.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I am after a recipe for **GINGER CORDIAL** made with green ginger, not powdered ginger – it's not ginger beer.

D Robinson,  
PO Box 444, TOLGA 4882.

## Dear Grass Roots,

I live not very far away from swampy and mangrove areas and have a pretty bad problem with sandflies and mozzies. If anyone knows a way to repel them, please tell me; it can be herbal, electric, plants, or even homemade repellent sprays.

Terry Stubbings,  
Lot 7, Paul James Dr, TOWNSVILLE 4810.

## Dear Megg & Staff,

I have four **TAMARILLO RECIPES** if anyone would like one. One with pork, one with omelette, one with chocolate cream and one with crepes and orange sauce.

Also, a **WART CURE** from a Sister Deirdre Prussak in a magazine: Mix equal parts of castor oil and carbonate of soda into a paste and apply twice daily for one month.

Soft fruit season is always a busy time. So far I've made two different batches of apricot chutney; one of apricot, apple and passionfruit jam; one of three-plum jam; and now three kilos of cherry plum jam is on the boil. A batch of malt bread last week turned out a bit salty so I'll have to watch my measurements for the next batch.

Think I almost have the shingles beaten, and then went down with what I now think was salmonella poisoning. I really thought my end was nigh and was so ill I didn't care, but I hit rock bottom and came up fighting fit. Life sure is surprising and I'm hopeful now of seeing my 80th in March.

Shirl Williamson,  
Modella Rd, LONGWARRY 3816.

## Dear Grass Roots Readers,

This is a very brief reply to Louise (GR148) who asked if anyone knew of an oil or cream that helps prevent **STRETCH MARKS**. There is a wonderful cream, aptly named 'Happy Event', which is readily available from most chemists. I can't quite remember the cost (but it is reasonable), as it has been well over two and a half years since I last used this product, following the birth of my second (and last) child in 1999. I used this cream during both my pregnancies and on both occasions I did not develop any stretch marks at all. I hope this information has been helpful to you Louise.

Heather Golding,  
126 Cliff Barrons Rd, UPPER ORMEAU 4208.

## Dear GRs,

I recently purchased the herb **STEVIA**. This herb has a very sweet leaf and can be used as a sweetener in cooking or tea or coffee. I don't know how to use it in cooking. If anyone can help me, I'd be grateful. I make a sweet liquid for tea or coffee by breaking up a handful of leaves and boiling them in about a litre of water and letting them cool before straining them off the water. I then use the liquid to make the tea or coffee. I don't add more water or dilute it. Is this the way to use the plant?

Anyone wanting seeds of the lovely **SNAIL CREEPER** can send an SAE and when they are ready I'll send them. This noninvasive creeper is treated as an annual in colder climates and can be grown from the seeds produced in long green beans when the lovely mauve and cream flowers have finished in late summer. The flowers hang in bunches and look like wisteria and have a beautiful fragrance.

Robyn Leah,  
61 Eighth St, WESTON 2325.

Contributors and correspondents who want letters or articles returned are requested to include correct postage. 

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK

## Dear GR Readers,

I would like to ask for some help in obtaining plans for a **GARDEN COMPOSTING SYSTEM**, as our soil is very poor and needs improving with manure, mulch etc. We would like to make a simple compost system.

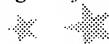
We also have a problem with fruit fly. They sting our vegies and devour them before we can even enjoy the fruits of our labour. Has anyone got any ideas for simple traps and what is good bait to use?

Also, lastly, an organic pest spray to make up to spray our vegies to help keep the pests at bay.

I would be happy to reply to any readers who would be kind enough to share their ideas and hints.

Maureen Varley,  
**59 Carralluma Cres, FERNVALE 4306.**

*We have printed articles in past issues of GR on all the topics you ask about. Compost: GRs 130, 129, 118, 117, 107, 100, 93, 90, 89, 87. Fruit Fly: GR112. Organic sprays/organic pest control: GRs 109, 108, 76. See page 82 for details of how to order back copies.*



## Dear All at Grass Roots,

Enclosed is my renewal of subscription for another year and a big thank-you for your marvellous magazine, like so many others around Australia we look forward to our brown paper parcel arriving in the letter box.

This is the first time I have written to you with a request, but I need some help with **GROWING MY OWN SPROUTS**. I have been attempting to grow alfalfa from seeds bought at the health food shop and they aren't as good as the ones from the supermarket. I have been growing them in a dark cupboard and spraying them twice daily (when I remember). Is my technique correct? Mine grow well at first then seem to shrivel up. Local health food shops only seem to have alfalfa and salad mix available, which I suspect may not be that fresh. I love to eat different kinds of sprouts and wonder if any readers have suggestions on where to get a greater variety of seeds.

Victoria Norfolk,  
**9 Ilkina Ave, FLORIDA GARDENS 4218.**



## Dear Megg & Mary,

Thank you for publishing my letter on the **USES OF PAWPAW FRUIT** in GR149, but there's more . . . I've come across a note I made some years ago when visiting an old friend in NSW. A few years ago, my friend Jenny got talking about her aunt, who lived in the Solomon Islands in the 1920s. Her aunt, Jenny said, became disabled with elephantiasis, a condition in which one leg became grossly swollen along its entire length with retained fluid. At that time little medical help was available. A Solomon Islander, who worked as a household servant, told the lady that he could help her if she would allow him to do so, and she gladly agreed.

He gathered fresh leaves from a nearby pawpaw tree and wrapped the leaves closely around the limb, covering it completely to the hip. He replaced the 'dressings' with fresh leaves as the previous ones wilted, and kept up this intensive treatment until the leg returned to normal size. Jenny didn't know how long this took, only that it worked when nothing else did. If pawpaw leaves were unavailable, then the insides of the pawpaw fruit skins could be applied instead, or so said her aunt when she returned to Australia on two good legs at a later time.

Can the pawpaw plant be yet another source of hardly tapped healing potential, waiting for scientific study? Again, I thank you for providing this wonderful forum for the exchange of ideas and inspirations.

Jane Smith,  
**KILSYTH 3137.**

## Dear GRs,

The DPI in Australia stresses the fact that communicable **ANIMAL DISEASES** can be spread easily. The feeding of animal by-products back to livestock and poultry is the major risk factor. Commercial animal fodder can and does contain animal by-products, however, these are clearly labelled and controlled. Remember that any meat or dairy product may be a problem. Be aware that they may not have been tested or treated.

That ham sandwich your child didn't eat at lunchtime may contain harmful bacteria or virus. Do not put it in the scraps bucket, even if it was homegrown. Research has shown that feeding pigs animal by-products in their swill can potentially cause disease. It may be okay to feed the excess milk from your farm to your pig, but not others. Even I have been lapse in emptying the cat's uneaten dinner into the pigs' bucket, or even allowed my chooks to enjoy the stomach contents of home-killed calf.

Unpasteurised milk contains bacteria. This bacteria has the ability to transmit disease and sickness from farm to farm, even to the next state. Authorities recommend that the milk obtained from untested stock, be it cows, goats or whatever, not be transported off the farm of origin. This means that taking a jug of your creamy home-produced milk to your friends is not practical. It can indeed be hazardous to other livestock. The law states that the sale of unpasteurised milk is illegal. This is not made to benefit commercial milk producers, but to protect their herds.

People must remember also that home-killed meat is not supposed to leave their property boundaries. This meat could be a potential source of disease. It is, however, considered safe to have a mobile butcher, with licence, transport meat which he has slaughtered.

Think about **FOOT AND MOUTH**. It is a communicable animal disease usually caused by careless acts. Just be careful and remember that Australia-wide agriculture can be at risk.

Faye Brown,  
**147 Mitchell St, ROSEDALE 4674.**

## Dear GRs,

My wife and I are in our mid to late fifties and have purchased a property several kilometres from the nearest town, that has neither mains power nor a domestic water supply. Improvements to our block include a mudbrick house, two dams with good catchments, a large shed and several water tanks. The house, dams and sheds are all in need of some remedial work and to solve the power situation we will be installing a solar system later in 2002.

Since purchasing the property we have had to remove some trees for fire and other safety reasons, which has also helped in the laying out of the vegetable garden and orchard areas. All of the existing plumbing has been either rerouted or replaced and a tank to collect all of our grey water has been installed so that it can be recycled onto the orchard areas.

This is not the first rural block we have had, but there will be things we will encounter where we will need advice, particularly with repairs to our mudbrick house and when we add another room. Because we need advice with some areas, and because we have quite a lot of knowledge in other areas, we would like to start a **SELF-SUPPORT GROUP** for people living on bush blocks. Items covered would be fruit and vegetable gardening, keeping of livestock; building construction and maintenance, cooking – including bread making and preserving. One item that we would also like to discuss with like-minded people is the 'care and survival of the older person on a rural block' as this problem is going to affect many of us in the years to come. Anyone who would like to join a self-help group can contact me regardless of where they live. I will be setting up a website that will act as a source for information and would like to conduct a group via it.

Barry Robertson,  
**Email: spsb@netconnect.com.au**

# FEEDBACK LINK-UP FEEDBACK



Dear Grass Roots,

Further to the **BIODIESEL DEBATE**. Firstly let's look at what biodiesel is not! Biodiesel is *not* running a diesel on vegetable oil, nor is it vegetable oil mixed with kerosene. Vodka has nothing to do with biodiesel and if folk care to blend it in they will produce a fuel more expensive than diesel as currently available. A quick trip to a bottle shop will confirm this! Sump oil blended with diesel is definitely *not* biodiesel either! All the above fuels are experimental, may run a diesel engine, may cause engine damage or may work on some engines perfectly. Biodiesel they aren't!

Biodiesel is a fuel made from vegetable oil, tallow or animal fat. Manufacturing it from vegetable oil, even used vegetable oil is easy and well within the reach of a backyard operation. The cetane value is similar to diesel fuel and, while it is not easy to determine cetane value at home, several other meaningful tests are possible.

Biodiesel is made by chemically 'splitting' the glycerin molecule from a vegetable oil molecule. A chemical called sodium methoxide is used. Sodium methoxide is made by blending methanol with caustic soda. The resultant biodiesel has a cetane rating similar to diesel fuel, is runny enough to easily pass through the fuel system of a modern diesel engine, and offers better lubricity and performance than conventional diesel fuel. Several books currently describe the process. My book, *Simple Biodiesel*, is a how-to guide that takes you step by step through the process for \$25 (interested readers call 03-6362-3050). The Internet is also a good starting point for anyone wanting further information. Keying in biodiesel to any search engine will keep you surfing for days. My website: [www.tasmanenergy.com.au](http://www.tasmanenergy.com.au) is another starting point.

Biodiesel is commercially available in USA, Europe and Australia. Australian Petroleum Supplies is a boutique \$3 million biodiesel refinery at Moama in southern NSW that produces 70,000 litres of biodiesel per day. Biodiesel has proved itself in their fleet of road trains, which collect canola oil from as far afield as Queensland. Their produce is available from seven APS service stations in Victoria and southern NSW. In December '01 it was selling for 82.9 cents per litre.

I have now travelled over 80,000 kilometres using biodiesel made at home from used cooking oil. It has cost me around 22 cents per litre to make, kept me amused, and saved me a small fortune. The feeling of driving on a homemade fuel is also priceless! In fact, I own three diesel engines, all of which run exclusively on homemade 'chip' fuel. A friend has a Holden Gemini diesel purchased for \$800. Already he has saved the purchase price of the car by driving on biodiesel.

Robert Sharman,

Tasman Energy Pty Ltd, PO Box 266, DELORAIN 7304.

Dear Megg & GR Readers,

I'm really taking a long shot here, but I'm hoping someone can help. My family and I live in Kambalda, WA. On 8 December 2001 the town had Christmas fireworks and we all had a lovely evening until we came home to find that our 9-year-old **BLACK LABRADOR**, Gus, had gone missing (scared off by fireworks). He had somehow managed to open the back gate. We have done everything that we can think of, including hiring a charter plane to see if we could spot him from the air. All local shires and vets were notified in all the surrounding goldfields areas. The only news we heard was that a black lab was seen near the Norseman Highway, which is the main drag to all the eastern states. I do firmly believe that he has been picked up by someone passing by. It's been months since he has gone and I still can't believe that my baby boy is not here anymore. Like I said, his name is Gus and he is a real sad sack, hasn't been desexed. It's a long shot, but I'm not ready to

lie down and give up yet.

Please, if anyone has any information I would be thrilled to hear from you. Someone just might know something of his whereabouts.

Peta Stephensen,  
44 Newcompton St, KAMBALDA 6442.



Dear Grass Roots,

We are hoping to learn about **MUDBRICK AND/OR STRAW BALE CONSTRUCTION** around the Melbourne area (up to two hours from). Does anyone know of useful contacts? Most of those who advertise workshops charge a fortune. Friends in NZ just learnt by trial and error and live in a house costing less than \$A500! I'm willing to help a bit in return for experience in construction – am fairly able!

Still interested in obtaining (or exchanging) **SEEDS FOR VEGETIES AND HERBS** if anyone has a surplus. Hope to organise a seed savers network and am learning heaps of late. Thank you to those who have helped us. I have so much to learn yet.

Am wondering if any **NEW ZEALANDERS** would be willing to allow us to make use of their GR collections and other self-sufficient lifestyle literature once we return mid-2003. Likely to be living in the Whangarei region.

Take care all, life is too short for unhappiness.

Alex and Rosalyn Harbuz,  
49 Sellich Dve, CROYDON 3136.  
Email: [aharbuz@hotmail.com](mailto:aharbuz@hotmail.com)

Dear Megg and Readers,

We are looking for **INFORMATION ABOUT TASMANIA**. We live in North Queensland and have not been to Tasmania. All the information we can get so far is for the tourist. We are looking at our options for the future and have considered Tasmania, among other places. We love the bush and love fishing. We would love to hear from readers.

Richard and Arlene Whittingham,  
79 Cutten St, BINGIL BAY 4852.  
Email: [cobwebcleaning1@bigpond.com.au](mailto:cobwebcleaning1@bigpond.com.au)

Information about Tasmania is one of the requests that recurs most frequently in GR. Ten years ago (yes, that long) we featured a number of articles over two issues, GRs 89 & 90. While not being up to date in some respects, most of the info in these articles is still valid. In addition, in GR 88, p 9, there was a Feedback letter pointing out some of the downside of living in Tassie, including distance from friends and family and high unemployment.

Please keep letters brief, clearly written and relevant to self-sufficiency topics. Letters pushing barrows (religious, political or other) will not be published. \*

# More Lazy Home Brewing

by Colin Gibson, Karana Downs, Qld.

I outlined my time- and labour-saving ideas for the brewing of home-produced beer in GR 144. This time I would like to share with you a few recipes and additions to help enhance your skills as a brewer and to produce a beer which should rival many commercially produced brews.

One of the simplest changes you can try is the addition of fresh hops to your beer. All you need to do to emulate the major brewers' practice of using fresh hops is to add about 15 – 25 grams of fresh hop flowers to the wort while it is simmering in the boiler. If you introduce the hop flowers at this point and simmer (not boil) for about five minutes, you will add a lovely aroma and taste to your beer. I place the hops in a knee-high stocking, available at any grocery store, tied off and dropped into the wort just like a tea bag. It is advisable that you use a new stocking unless the last user has

sweet smelling feet. Discard this hop-filled stocking (after squeezing every last drop into your wort), unless you are very thrifty and really want to wash and reuse it I suppose.

If you would like better head characteristics, you can add 200 – 400 grams of corn syrup, which will impart a creamy thick head without increasing the alcohol content by much. This is to be added when you add the brew pack.

Many people taste an apple cider flavour in home-produced beer. If this is a problem, try using dextrose in place of sugar when preparing your wort. It should be remembered that, weight for weight, dextrose will make a lower alcohol beer, by about 20 percent.

Some people wish to increase the alcohol content, which is easily attained by the addition of extra sugar or dextrose. As a rule of thumb, for every 100 grams of sugar added to the wort, you will increase the alcohol content by

about one-quarter of a percent. You could make real rocket fuel if you want to, but remember that by increasing the sugar/dextrose alone, the beer can become watery and more bitter (this is because alcohol has a bitter flavour).

A better solution to produce higher alcohol beers is to use your normal 750 grams – 1 kilogram of sugar and add either liquid or dry malt extract (available at any home brew shop) which will help to maintain or even add flavour. I would strongly advise the addition of hops to maintain the flavour balance. By using malt you would expect a similar increase in alcohol compared to adding sugar at the same weight. It is a silly fallacy that two or more teaspoons of sugar added to the bottle will make a stronger beer. This will only over-prime the bottles, causing a real risk of bottles exploding and injuring someone.

Remember, when making beer *cleanliness is paramount.* ▶

apples, bananas, cherries, dandelion, endive, figs, herbs, hummus, soyabean, tea, soap, macadamias, garlic, chillies, lemon grass, pasta, cauliflours, roses, broccoli, peas, rocket, lettuce, bokchoy, avocados, tomatoes, herbal extracts, massage oils, potatoes, carrots, cheese, jams, sauces, eggs, honey and more .....

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# Grass Roots In My Life

by Vicki Judd, Boronia, Vic.

I've been contemplating the arrival in the very near future of yet another *Grass Roots* landmark, the 150th issue. What a difference it has made in my life since I discovered it at a newsstand at Sydney Central Station more years ago than I like to remember (that was issue 18 and about 23 years ago).

I'd had a fairly fortunate upbringing for a child growing up in the 1950s. My mother worked, one grandmother was a single parent (that's a story all on its own), my grandfather cooked, Dad baked scones every Sunday and my other grandmother darned socks, turned worn shirt collars and cuffs, washed clothes in a copper, and made cakes, pies and ice cream at home. She and Grandpa also grew vegies and some fruit, so a *Grass Roots* lifestyle wasn't totally foreign to me even back then.

Mum and Dad didn't see a need to grow vegies or fruit, darn socks or mend clothes. They had the go-to-the-shops-and-buy-it mentality of the time, probably because they were not affected by the Depression in the 1930s. Grandpa had had a job and, while growing vegies during the war made sense, the war was well and truly over by then, so go-and-buy-it was the rage: and why mend it when you can toss it out and replace it?

Nonetheless, once I left home I was on a low enough income that what I read in GR18, and ever since then, made sense and seemed relevant. I tried growing vegies and fruits, with varying degrees of success, learned to make jam, bottled fruit, bought a freezer, started making yoghurt, have milled my own flour, made bread, soap and paper, made ice cream, peanut butter and cashew butter.

In my childhood I learnt to knit from my grandmother, and an auntie taught me to crochet, so I've put those skills to use over the years. I also darn and mend. All these skills are great with three boys to keep in clothes.

Those 23 years have seen many changes in my life. I married, divorced, moved around a bit. Then I married Jim and had my three boys – Christopher, now 16½, Bryan 14½ and Ben 12½. I've become an avid bargain hunter and op-shopper, discovered that I can write fairly well and am still learning new skills all the time.

My steepest learning curve came about, however, in June 2001 when Jim died, leaving me as a single parent. I wish I could say everything had run smoothly since then, but nothing has. I've managed to stay positive and have sorted most of the problems out, with a lot of encouragement from the wonderful friends I've made through *Grass Roots*. Ida Browning and her wonderfully talented daughter Susan (Susie Wong) who has won prizes for her craft work; Betty Toft who recently lost her husband of many years, John, and shortly afterwards her beloved mother-in-law who was in her 90s; Martin and Eva Finzel; Cathy Carter; Robyne Neal and so many more – thanks to you all. Mustn't forget Jan Atkinson who has been kind enough to pass on a Fowlers Vacola outfit with bottles, a food dehydrator and a pressure cooker, all of which will be well used I assure you.

I was sad to read of the passing away of Renate. I always loved her letters and have often wondered where she was and what she was up to.

Pam Cole, I love your articles, they always seem to bring back happy memories. Elsie Hoare, keep on giving us hints on mending and other practical things. Marjorie Bligh, you are a true national treasure – how are you going these days? I was going to say 'now you are on your own', but as I've found out, we are not on our own; we have a wonderful family through the pages of *Grass Roots*.

One thing I mustn't forget to mention is that *Grass Roots* has taught me to love and respect nature and the envi-

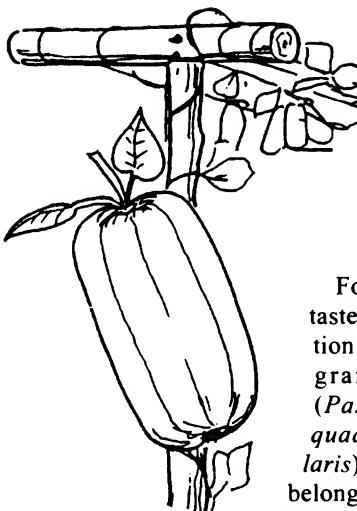


ronment, something that wasn't known or understood when I was growing up. After Jim died, the boys, some of his friends and I went to a tribute tree planting day at the Upper Yarra Dam near Warburton. This was organised by the undertaker in conjunction with Parks Victoria and Greening Australia. There was a memorial service for those who had died, followed by the families and friends planting native vegetation (trees, grasses and bushes) that occurs naturally in the magnificent forests of the area. The local indigenous people were asked for advice as well. There have been two or three tree plantings there and once the area is completely revegetated the project will move to another area.

I'm not sure if this service is available outside Victoria. Here it is run by Tobin Brothers, Frances Tobin Funerals By Women and Abbey funerals. The ceremonies are held twice a year, in autumn and spring, and anyone is free to book in to go along and join in no matter which funeral director you used or how long ago you lost your loved one. You'll receive a certificate to remember the occasion and can make subsequent visits to see how what you helped plant will eventually blend in as it grows.

This is not intended as a 'plug' for the funeral director, just for the environment. It's a great way to have a lasting tribute to someone you love, especially when, in our case, we chose cremation and disposed of the remains ourselves, so there is no grave or plaque at a cemetery.

The one thing left to say is a big thank-you to Megg, Mary, David, Suni and so many others over the years who have worked to put this fabulous magazine together for 150 issues. May many more editions follow. There is more need for this advice and generosity of spirit than ever before in this disposable society. ♦



For a taste sensation try the granadilla (*Passiflora quadrangularis*) which belongs to the same genus as the well-known purple passionfruit (*Passiflora edulis*). Both thrive in the warm humid coastal areas of Queensland, though the purple passionfruit is equally at home over much of Australia.

You'll need a trellis for successful growing of either crop. Fences are sometimes used for passionfruit but are too low and light for the larger granadilla. Both crops are easier to tend if grown on a trellis above head height.

Under normal seasonal conditions in northern Queensland you would not need to irrigate, though a long spell of dry weather would prevent fruits from thickening and filling without a good supply of water.

In the tropics both passionfruit and granadilla produce two crops a year, a main summer crop and a second lighter crop in winter. Passionfruit are self-fertilising, but granadillas have to be hand-fertilised (best done in the afternoon or evening). Granadillas may crop lightly all year with peaks in late summer and late winter.

#### GRANADILLA PIE

4 cups chopped granadilla (the white flesh)  
scooped out seeds of granadilla  
1½ cups sugar  
2 tbsp cornflour  
pastry for 1 pie

Line a flan dish with half the pastry. Mix together the fruit, seeds, sugar and cornflour and fill the crust. Cover with the rest of the pastry rolled into strips and placed criss-cross on the top. Bake in a hot oven for about 20 minutes, then reduce heat and bake for a further 10.

# Passion For Granadilla

by Susan Hands, On The Road.

#### PASSIONFRUIT & GRANADILLA JAM

1 dozen passionfruit  
1 lge granadilla  
1.4 kg sugar

Scoop the pulp from the passionfruit. Boil the passionfruit skins with 600 ml of water until they are tender. Strain and add the liquid to the peeled and sliced granadilla. Boil until granadilla softens. Add sugar and passionfruit pulp and stir the mixture until sugar dissolves. Boil until thick.

#### PICKLED GRANADILLA

Place 1 kg of cut granadilla in dish, cover with vinegar and let stand for 24 hours, stirring a few times. Drain vinegar. Measure same amount of sugar as granadilla and place in dish in layers ending in sugar. Stir each day until sugar dissolves. In three days pack in jars and seal. Lovely with curries.

#### PASSIONFRUIT CORDIAL

Dissolve 3 cups of sugar in 3 cups of boiling water. Scoop out seeds of 12 passionfruit. Pour syrup over passionfruit seeds, add 2 teaspoons of tartaric acid. Mix well. Bottle when cool.

#### GRANADILLA CHUTNEY

1 lge granadilla or 2 sml  
1 tbsp salt  
1 kg onions  
½ kg beans  
1.4 kg brown sugar  
60 g curry powder  
2.3 lt brown vinegar  
60 g ground ginger  
30 g peppercorns  
3 chillies, hot  
1 cup plain flour  
1 tbsp mustard

Peel granadilla, remove seeds, sprinkle with salt. Allow to stand 24 hours. Drain. Tie spices in muslin bag. Add to vinegar and boil well with the brown sugar. Add granadilla, onions and beans. Boil until soft. Blend flour curry and mustard with a little vinegar. Add to mixture and boil 3 minutes.

#### GROWING GRANADILLAS

- Fruits of the giant granadilla (*Passiflora quadrangularis* var *macrocarpa*) can grow up to 40 centimetres long and 24 centimetres wide. A strong supporting structure is needed for these.

- Obtain seeds from a fresh fruit and plant them immediately. Germination takes from 14 – 21 days. Transplant seedlings when they are 20 – 30 centimetres high.

- Cuttings are easy to strike during the summer wet season (in the tropics). Snip 30-centimetre lengths from vigorous laterals and remove foliage from the bottom 20 centimetres. Plant in free-draining potting mix.

- Fruit forms on new wood.
- Hand-pollination is needed for large-fruiting variety. Do this 4 – 6 hours after buds open and use a feather or small paintbrush.

- Fruit is mature when the colour turns from green to yellow at the apex. ¶

Cool and bottle.

#### PASSIONFRUIT BUTTER

120 g butter  
1 cup sugar  
2 eggs  
pulp of 12 passionfruit  
1 tbsp lemon juice

Put butter and sugar in top part of double saucepan, and melt slowly. Beat eggs, add passionfruit then add to butter and sugar. Heat slowly over simmering water, stirring until consistency of honey. Remove from heat and when nearly cold add lemon juice. Pour mixture into hot sterilised jars and seal. ¶

Also see Susan Hands's article on Granadilla in GR112. ¶





# KIDS PAGE

## THE WAYS WE SEE THINGS



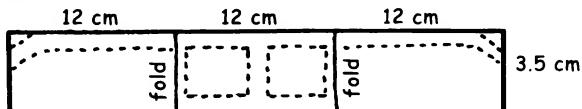
We often take the world around us for granted but if we remember to observe changes and patterns in things, and to look at things from different angles, lots of interesting things are revealed to us. This page suggests some ways to 'open your eyes' to different ways of seeing things.

### Rose-Coloured Glasses

Colour your world with these groovy glasses!

**You will need:**

lightweight cardboard  
cellophane (rose or any other colour)  
PVA glue  
scissors



**How to make:**

Draw a rectangle 36 cm wide x 3.5 cm high on the cardboard. Cut out glasses shape by cutting the rectangle as indicated by the dotted lines in the diagram. Cut 2 rectangular shapes of cellophane approximately 6 cm wide x 3 cm high. Glue these to the inside of the areas for lenses. Fold where indicated to create the arms of the glasses.

### Word Search

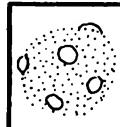
Find and circle the following tools that help us observe things around us differently:  
prisms, kaleidoscope, spectacles, sunglasses, telescope, periscope, binoculars, microscope, contactlens.

F	I	K	Q	P	C	W	B	D	M	S	E	N	C
V	H	J	A	E	K	I	I	E	N	L	Y	Z	A
T	E	J	S	R	O	L	N	R	S	Q	B	U	P
E	M	K	U	U	G	A	O	I	P	V	X	E	I
L	N	A	M	L	N	J	C	T	R	S	D	H	K
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S	P	E	C	T	A	C	L	E	S	H	Z	T	Y
C	J	I	R	B	C	O	A	A	M	Q	X	G	H
O	R	D	O	Z	P	E	R	I	S	C	O	P	E
P	N	O	S	X	W	K	S	Y	A	S	H	E	R
E	F	S	C	J	U	I	C	E	H	A	E	I	T
B	E	C	O	N	T	A	C	T	L	E	N	S	E
U	S	O	P	Q	Z	A	P	L	E	N	C	E	W
V	R	P	E	H	C	O	N	M	K	L	G	A	H
M	Q	E	D	R	Y	V	C	I	L	O	N	A	Z

### Guess What These Are

From under the microscope . . .

(Answers below, hold page upside down in front of a mirror.)



### Make A Kaleidoscope

A kaleidoscope is a tube you look into that makes beautiful patterns by reflections of beads and other small objects on mirrors. Rotate the tube to vary the pattern.

**You will need:**

clear 35 mm film container with lid  
mirrored paper board (available from craft shops)  
stiff clear plastic disk or plastic wrap  
beads, 100's and 1000's, seeds, flowers etc  
tape

**How to make:**

Using a clear film container, drill a hole 5 mm in diameter in the bottom for the eyehole (ask for an adult's help). Cut a piece of mirrored board 4 cm by 7.5 cm. Fold to make a triangle with the mirror side to the inside. Tape it to hold the triangle shape. Insert it inside the film container. Now put a few beads etc in the indentation of the inside of the lid. Cover with a piece of stiff plastic about the size of a ten-cent piece. Place the cylinder onto the lid and snap into place. Point it up to the light and turn. You can adjust the amount of sprinkles if they do not move or there is not enough to make designs.

### BOOK REVIEW

#### The Usborne Complete Book of the Microscope

by Kirsteen Rogers

This book tantalises budding scientists with images and descriptions of what microscopes enable us to see. It also contains some practical information on how to use and care for these amazing instruments. A great book to accompany a child's experimentation with a microscope.

H/b, Usborne Imprint, HarperCollins, 25 Ryde Rd, PYMBLE 2073. RRP \$24.95.

Answers to the word search:  
prisms, kaleidoscope, spectacles, sunglasses, telescope, periscope, binoculars, microscope, contactlens.

# IN THE KITCHEN

The brief for this landmark issue was to put together a nostalgic Grass Roots meal from favourite recipes of the past. Really! How subjective can you get? Obviously an opportunity for a little self-indulgence. No doubt readers will have their own typical or favourite recipes, but we hope you enjoy our choices.

## BROAD BEAN PÂTÉ

1 kg broad beans, shelled

125 g cream cheese

2 tbsp chopped parsley

juice 1 lemon

freshly ground black pepper

Cook beans, drain and pound to a paste. Beat in other ingredients. Press into an earthenware bowl, chill. Serve with crisp toast.

As an alternative starter or snack, try Lentil Paté, from GR 60, page 64.

## INCREDIBLE QUICHE

Beat together:

3 eggs

1½ cups milk

½ cup SR flour

1 tsp salt

herbs of choice

1 onion, chopped

Add 3 – 4 large handfuls of chopped greens such as amaranth, Ceylon spinach, Chinese watercress. Add cooked cold meat, bacon, grated cheese, mushroom if desired.

Pour into large greased oven dish and bake in moderate oven for 20 minutes, or until set.

Or try the sweet or savoury impossible pies in GR 92, page 50.

## VEGETABLE PATTIES

1 cup mashed potato

1 cup cooked mashed carrot

½ cup cooked shredded silverbeet

1 egg yolk

½ cup snipped parsley

2 tbsp fine dry breadcrumbs

2 tbsp butter

¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

flour

salad oil

Mix thoroughly all vegetables, butter, cheese and breadcrumbs with the egg yolk. Shape into patties and dust lightly with flour. Sauté in small amount of oil over medium heat until

brown on both sides.

Other patties/burgers to try are the Lentil Burgers in GR 76, page 51 and the Red Lentil Patties from GR 91, page 51.

## BAKED BUTTERNUT PUMPKIN

1 medium butternut

salt & pepper to taste

Cut pumpkin in half, remove pips with spoon, sprinkle with salt & pepper. Cook on greased tray at 180° C till tender.

### Stuffing

500 g favourite soft/cream cheese

1½ cups walnut pieces, dry roasted peanuts or pine nuts

2 cloves garlic, crushed

soy sauce, to taste

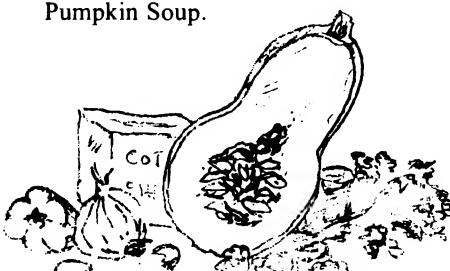
tahini, to taste

freshly ground black pepper, to taste

handful chopped parsley

Mix all thoroughly and pile into pumpkin cavities. Reheat at 180° C for about 15 – 20 minutes. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese before serving if desired.

If you're a pumpkin fan, GR 91, page 51 has recipes for Golden Pumpkin Cake, Pumpkin Scones and Pumpkin Soup.



## ZUCCHINI FRITTERS

Fattening, but delicious, definitely not for those on low-fat diets.

Make a batter of 125 g plain flour, 1 tsp baking powder, 1 egg, 1 tbsp olive oil and 150 ml water. Slice zucchini to ½ cm thickness. Sprinkle with salt and



let stand for half an hour. Drain and dry. Dip in batter and deep fry.

## CORN FRITTERS

From the first issue of GR.

2 cups cooked corn

2 eggs, separated

3 tbsp milk or cream

3 tbsp wholemeal flour

½ tsp vanilla essence

Beat egg yolks with a pinch of pure sea salt. Combine with corn, milk and vanilla essence. Add pepper, spices, herbs to your taste. Whip egg whites till stiff and fold into mixture. Heat oil in a deep frying pan. Drop tablespoons of the mixture into the pan. Fry on both sides till brown.

## SUGARLESS APPLE PIE

1½ cups wholemeal flour, ½ SR and ½ plain

3 tbsp margarine

1 tbsp oil

½ – ¼ cup water to mix

1 tbsp honey

1 tsp ground ginger

4 – 5 apples

½ cup sultanas

Mix flours together with cinnamon.

Melt margarine gently, add oil and then honey and water. It will be cool enough to use at once. Make a well in the flour and pour in the wet mixture. Knead well and line a tart plate with half the pastry. Peel apples, slice and arrange over pastry. Sprinkle sultanas over apples then cover with pastry. Bake in moderate oven till pastry top is golden brown.

## FRESH FRUIT COCKTAIL

juice of 12 oranges

1 punnet ripe strawberries

3 – 4 soft peaches

Blend all on low speed till liquified but still leaving chunky pieces. Chill before serving. Garnish with kiwi fruit slices. ☺

# Spaghetti Squash

by Pamela Odijk, Bribie Island, Qld.  
Photo by Herman Odijk.

I am not particularly fond of squash, but I do like this one. It acquired its name because of the way its yellow flesh separates into spaghetti-like strands when cooked. It is thought to have originated in northern Mexico (some authorities suggest Japan), but in recent years has become a very popular vegetable in most western countries including Australia.

Spaghetti squash are fast growing, with each vine producing five to seven squash. They can be trained to grow over a trellis or wire netting because the vegetables are not too heavy and will not break off the vine. I grew my first ones together with Purple King beans for unusual colour effect near the house. The squash are harvested when they turn a golden yellow and will keep for three months after harvesting.

## COOKING

Some people advocate piercing the whole squash with small holes and boiling it, but it can be cut (and the seeds can then be saved) and boiled in pieces as one would cook any other squash. When cooked, the flesh separates into strands or 'vegetable spaghetti'. It is delicious served with a cheese, garlic or tomato sauce. These squash are particularly low in starch, making them a favourite for people on special diets.

## Spaghetti Squash Medley

large spaghetti squash, quartered, seeded, and boiled  
 2 cobs of corn  
 3 tbsp olive oil  
 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped finely  
 1 clove garlic  
 basil leaves, to taste  
 1 cup cooked peas  
 2 - 3 carrots  
 1/4 tsp nutmeg  
 salt and pepper  
 Cut the corn from the cob and slice the carrots finely. Heat the oil in a

Cut the corn from the cob and slice the carrots finely. Heat the oil in a



frypan over gentle heat and cook the onion and garlic for a few minutes until soft. Add the basil, corn, carrots and peas and allow to cook, covered, until just tender. Scoop out the spaghetti squash strands and add to pan. Stir until heated through Add the seasonings and serve hot.

### **Spaghetti Squash Supreme**

- 1 medium spaghetti squash
- 1 medium eggplant
- 3 medium green tomatoes
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper
- 2 tbsp butter
- 250 g mushrooms, sliced

1 cup grated cheese  
Cut the spaghetti squash into quarters, take out the seeds and boil until cooked. In the meantime, peel the eggplant and cut it into small cubes. Place it in another saucepan of boiling salted water while the squash cooks. (This removes the bitterness.) Chop the green tomatoes into small cubes and drain in a colander for a few minutes.

Heat the olive oil in a frypan and

sauté the eggplant pieces for five minutes. Add green tomatoes and garlic and cook for a further 10 minutes. Add the parsley, salt and pepper, and set aside. When the squash is soft, scrape out the pulp which will come away like strands of spaghetti.

In another small frypan, melt the butter and sauté the mushrooms until they are tender. Drain off the liquid, add the squash and heat. Reheat the tomato and eggplant mixture.

Place the spaghetti squash and mushroom mixture in a casserole dish. Sprinkle with the grated cheese, then pour the tomato and eggplant mixture on top of this. Serve at once.

See more on spaghetti squash in GR 96. 

## TAKING STOCK

## Recycling

In 1989 the recycling sector was worth slightly more than \$1 billion for the year: recycling metals was estimated to be worth \$750 million, paper worth \$200 million, plastics \$40 million and glass \$20 million. 

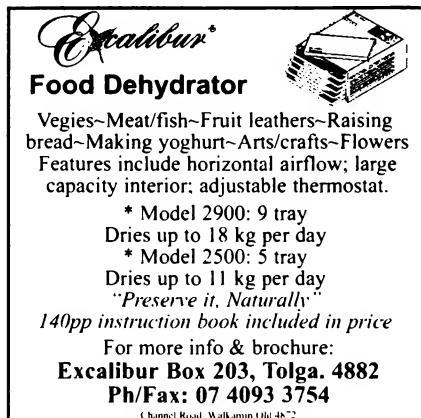
# PICKING A PACK OF PEAS AND PEPPERS AND . . .

by Robert Millet, Coffs Harbour, NSW.

When garden crops are yelling out to be harvested – Pick me! I'm ripe! No, pick me! No, I'm riper! – could any gardener resist such temptations? So, many of us have a wander out and before we know it our pockets and hands are full of vegies, flowers, sprigs and fruit. After awhile I got annoyed with this arrangement of packing lumpy fruits and vegies into all my pockets as I walked about the garden, and later in the house unloading flattened tomatoes or squashed figs from my shirt. Holding out a shirt front or apron restricts a gardener to one-hand picking. No, there had to be a better way.

I could not find what I felt to be 'the solution' until I saw a TV wildlife program about those famous marching red crabs of Christmas Island and, later, a mob of kangaroos and joeys cavorting in a Victorian paddock. They looked similar to a crab eating – the claws pivoting directly into the mouth area with their morsels. I wanted to pick, say, fruit, without looking where to drop it. Well, I thought, my forearms and hands do exactly that to my upper chest. Viola! A roo's pouch bag carried higher on the chest.

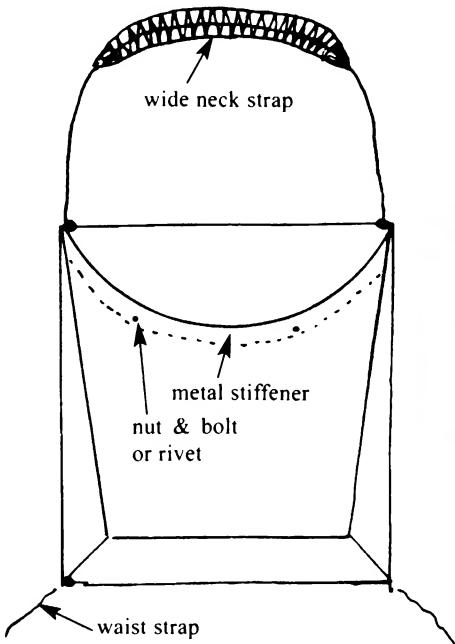
Well, it was up on to the low-pollution treadly for a trip to an op shop to find a suitable bag. Finally, I found a leatherette carry case for a bit of



obsolete equipment, about 250 x 250 x 50 millimetres. In the top corners of the bag I attached a *wide* and *soft* neck strap, knowing that a bag of fruit or vegies can be heavy. If possible, fit an adjustable strap to suit children too. After a trial picking it was back to the workshop for modifications. I added a thin strip of aluminium at the top of the bag to keep it open, forming the letter 'D', the flat side against my chest. Now I had a bag that rested right where I could drop my pickings into it without looking, and the top of the bag stayed open. Then I added a waist strap at the bottom corners to keep the bag close to me when required.

For several seasons now the picking bag has functioned very well indeed. Both my hands are free – to be up a ladder, holding a branch up high to get at the fruit underneath, holding a plant while I gently pick off the fruit, or using a trowel to dig up veggies. On those occasions when I must empty the bag a few times, as with soft tomatoes

## Picking Bag



or figs, I bring a huge bowl or box out to the garden. When I bend over to pick up a low item, the bag swings away from my body to hang vertically, thus nothing falls out. On particular occasions, as when I am up a ladder, I use the waist strap to keep the bag in close so I do not get entangled with long branches.

I can heartily recommend making a picking bag – it has made my harvest time in the garden so much easier. If a piece of fruit or vegie has left a mess in the bag, I simply wipe it out with a damp cloth and I'm ready to pick again. Come to think of it, I haven't had to scrape sticky fruit bits from my shirt pockets for quite a long spell. 

## TAKING STOCK

## Paper Use

In 1998 Australians used 3.5 million tonnes of paper, and 1.8 million tonnes was collected for recycling. 

## Free Web Sites

### Are you involved with

- Farmer's Markets • Food Co-ops
- Community Gardens • CSAs
- Organic Farms • Farm Gate Trails
- Grower's Associations • Seed Savers

## **Australian Community Foods**

Is a non-profit technology service that  
can put you on the internet today!

www.communityfoods.com.au

0407-275-600

**0407-275-600**

# Changing Tastes?

by Sally Carr, Nagambie, Vic.

*Grass Roots* has been encouraging readers to eat well for close to 30 years now. While tastes have changed and new information is constantly coming to the fore about eating habits and health, a cursory glance through the last 149 copies of the magazine leads me to the inevitable conclusion that GR readers must be a pretty healthy bunch. We've definitely been on the right track over the years and not gone in for all that processed muck. Others are belatedly catching on too – some of you must have been passing the word around! Take a quick walk down the supermarket aisle today and you'll see free range eggs, organic vegies, soya products, sourdough bread, goats' milk and muesli, all routinely referred to in early (and later) *Grass Roots* editions, but certainly not a feature of your average Australian supermarket in the 1970s.

The magazine's recipe ideas and food articles span nearly 30 years and show a tasty wholefood diet has always been a preoccupation with readers, though there has sensibly been room for a little indulgence here and there – Roberino's recent chocolate cake was a stunning example. An ongoing theme has concerned innovative ways of dealing with gluts of homegrown produce. If you end up with a load of fruit or vegies, chances are that you'll be able to put them to good use by finding a timeless chutney, jam, jelly, pickle, butter or relish recipe for your harvest somewhere in a back copy of *Grass Roots*.

Readers have always liked doing it for themselves. Not only do you have the security of knowing what you eat and drink is properly prepared, but you also gain satisfaction and save money. *Grass Roots* has covered the lot: bread making, home brewing, butter and cheese making, food drying and preserving, wine making, smoking and preserving meats, and much more. Many of these valuable skills are

underutilised and even being forgotten in our consumer-oriented society, but *Grass Roots* has always tried to arm readers with enough information to enable independence through a broad range of practical skills.

Most recipes have certainly stood the test of time, for example in the very first edition of *Grass Roots* there is a tasty raw spinach and mushroom salad. Sadly though, some ideas may never catch on to a wide audience and were presumably designed more for expediency than taste. Any takers for pickled chokos, or Algerian chokos even? (Apologies Pam Odijk!) Often readers were able to share fascinating information from their past – like Renate with her knowledge of German peasant foods for instance. Certainly, we were way ahead of our time on some things. Muesli recipes would have been a new thing for readers in GR 3. As for those commercially produced packets of the stuff, they came along much later.

There have been some new ideas and themes over the years though. Today we know it's best to eat eggs in moderation in order to maintain reasonable cholesterol levels. Food allergies have been acknowledged as a real health problem for some and the special needs of those with such sensitivities are now more likely to be catered for. Also, the recently acknowledged health benefits of a diet utilising monounsaturated oils and limiting dairy intake have led to Asian and Mediterranean diets becoming popular – or maybe it's just that they taste great! All these shifts in awareness can be seen reflected in the food pages of *Grass Roots* too.

One debate still raging concerns the long-term health implications of dubious farm production methods and genetically modified crops. Consequently, labelling has become a big issue because it is one way consumers can really be sure about what they are eating.



Unfortunately, though, proposed government policy to enforce stricter controls and protect consumers' rights was severely watered down last year. Market forces obviously recognised an opportunity here and, in response to the resulting increase in public concern about our health, we can now find many more foods in the shops being labelled as organic and biodynamic. Mind you, the well-practiced *Grass Roots* strategy of growing your own must still be considered the safest policy for family health.

Many have yet to catch on to the fantastic benefits for both mind and body of a diet rich in fresh fruit and vegetables (home-grown preferably), whole grains, a little protein and monounsaturated fat. Maybe it's just easier for them to get a takeaway, but it would be a tragedy if the pleasure of cooking became a skill enjoyed by only a few. Apparently, some newly built city apartments are being designed with no kitchen as such, just a space for the microwave – it's all too scary. Or another thought closer to home, maybe the use of trusty, but environmentally dubious, wood burning stoves could even be outlawed one day.

On reflection overall, though, I think readers have the right to be quite pleased with themselves. Over the years there has been a definite consistency in the *Grass Roots* approach to food, which has since been endorsed by health research, much of which is now routinely accepted as common knowledge. With recent health scares like salmonella, foot and mouth and mad cow disease resulting from intensive production methods, chances are that more people will decide to support small organic foods producers or try to become as self sufficient as possible. So we could end up with *Grass Roots* leading the way for others, and setting the standard for a happier, tastier and healthier way of life. □

# TOP PAWPAW TIPS

by Pauline Kenyon, Dunoon, NSW.

When trying to grow pawpaw seedlings, one seed in each pot, in the shadehouse, I found a few seeds did not germinate. Of those that did germinate, some either subsequently died in the pot or died after being transplanted, or there were too many male trees after they were planted out.

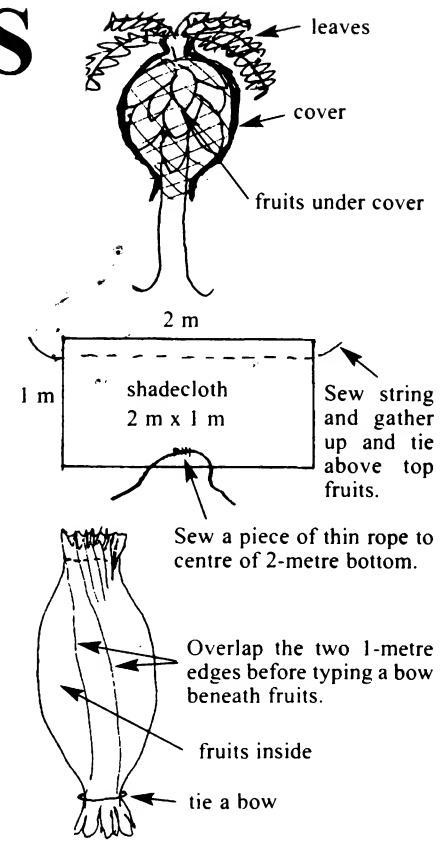
## MY SOLUTION

Prepare the individual places about 1.5 metres apart where pawpaw trees are needed. I dig in some soaked dried manure, compost, Dynamic Lifter, plus a sprinkling of dolomite. In each place plant six to eight seeds in a circle about 25 centimetres in diameter. Mark and protect the place with a cylinder-shaped circle of cut chicken wire about 30 centimetres high, held in place with two sticks. Mulch and water them. As male trees show their flowers at one year old, and females at two years old, up to one year after sowing, select which seedling

is the best in each circle and destroy the remainder. The remaining tree is direct-sown and you have already organised the desired ratio of one male to six to eight females. I like to allow at least two males, in case the only one selected dies! Even male trees have fruit (on long stalks) when about three years old.

## PAWPAW PROTECTION

In northern NSW where I live, my pawpaw tree leaves are shed in winter and the new leaves grow from the centre top, but are not large enough to prevent sunburn on the well-formed fruits even by October – November. I solved the sunburn problem with a shadecloth cover, which also protected the fruit from birds or fruit bats. Fruit bats are apparently becoming more prevalent in this area because of the loss of their natural rainforest habitat. They operate at night, so we never saw our pawpaw fruits being attacked. ¶



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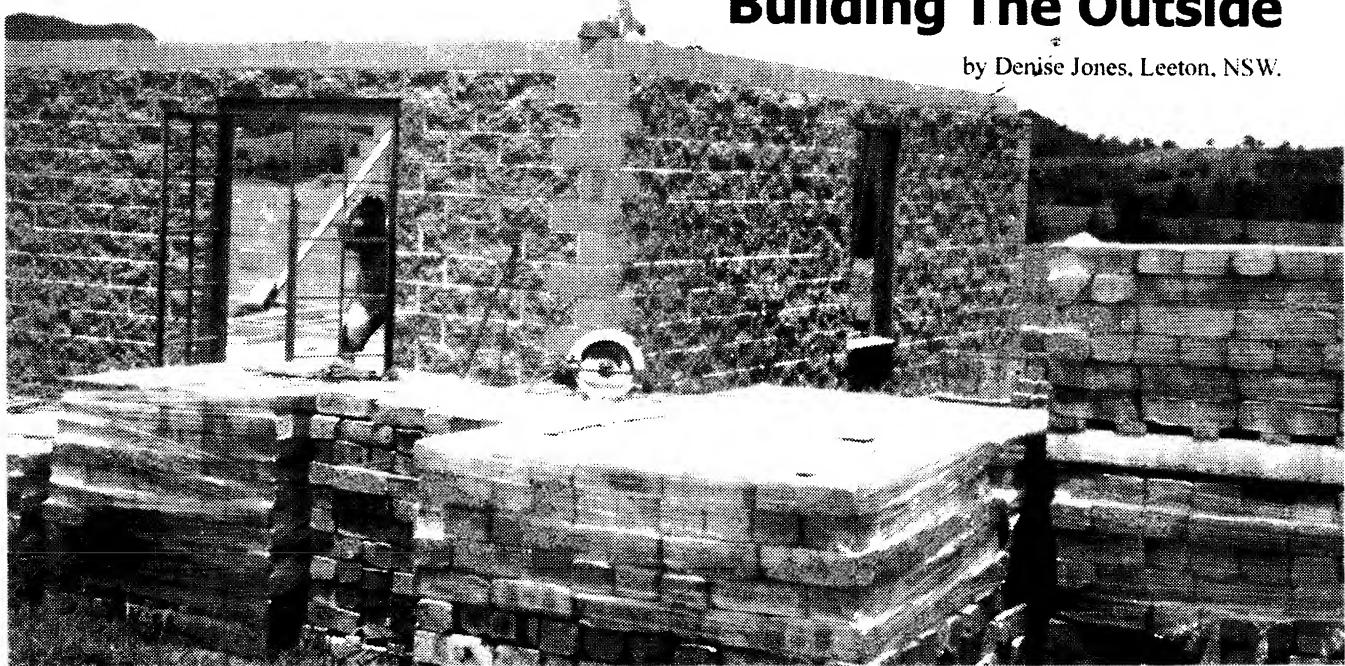
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# PRIDE AND ACHIEVEMENT

## Building The Outside

by Denise Jones, Leeton, NSW.



Once the shed was built the next stage of the project was getting started on the house. I had arranged with my builder friend to do the cement slab for me; to form it up, organise a plumber, cement trucks and anything else required. He gave me my quote, which was around \$10,000 to \$11,000. To me, this was a lot of money to go out in one large sum. Already I was beginning to feel I wasn't going to have enough money and I would have to be careful. I felt it was most important to get the slab laid professionally; being the foundation to the house, everything at this point had to be perfectly square to make the next stages easier.

As I described to you last time, my house plan was a basic rectangle shape, and my main concern was to at least have the rooms spacious, especially the bedrooms. I gave the go-ahead for the slab because the land wasn't perfectly level and I had to cut and fill. I could have had all this done by the builder, but because I lived out of town it was going to cost too much money to get the soil delivered. I thought I would get my own soil from out of the creek. I made enquiries about the hire of a

backhoe and I borrowed a tractor from one of the vegie farms I worked on, also a hydraulic carrot trailer to bring the soil from the creek to the house site. I had organised for this to be done over the weekend and the builder was coming on Monday with a bobcat to spread soil and start forming up for the slab. I felt pleased with myself with this idea and how it was coming together. There was something I didn't have control over and that was the weather. It rained leading up to the weekend, but I thought it would be all right to still go ahead. Well, what an experience that day turned out to be.

Driving the tractor up and back to the house site through the wet paddock turned out to be a nightmare. The backhoe had loaded up the trailer with soil and I had a slight rise to get up from out of the creek. Well, I could not even make it up that rise. The wheels of the tractor were spinning and slipping. My heart in my mouth and my stomach churning, I had to reverse back down the bank and tip the soil out because it was too heavy to get up the wet track. When I went to lift the trailer there wasn't enough hydraulic power to get

it up in the air. Thankfully, that problem was solved by putting the backhoe bucket under the front of the trailer to help lift it. I started again with not quite as much soil in the trailer. This time I set out as fast as I could to get up the track of the creek bank. Memories of the nursery rhyme of the train saying 'I think I can, I think I can' were going over in my head as I was trying to get to the top. The closer I was to the top the slower I was moving. Then I made it! I breathed a sigh of relief (or really just began to breathe).

The rest of the journey was about 150 metres. It felt like 150 kilometres through the wet paddock, which also ended up a mess, chopped up and gouged out with deep tracks. Anyway, we finally got enough soil up there. It took a lot longer than I had anticipated, all day in fact. I was so glad to finally get the last load tipped and be finished. Was it worth it? Yes, money-wise it still saved me \$1100 doing it that way. Emotionally, I'm not sure. After revisiting that day I can still feel all the anxiety and fear I experienced then, but I will put it down to a character building experience, or feel the fear

and do it anyway.

In the meantime I was getting quotes for materials from various sources. The saying 'shop around' is so true. Prices vary so much. Actually, this part of the project I really enjoyed. If you want to get a dose of self-confidence and self-satisfaction, this is what I did. I approached three different retailers, told them I was building a house and asked what their quote would be if I bought all the material through them, also if that was their best price. I got my quotes. The differences on some items were amazing. What I ended up doing was choosing the items at the best price and purchasing those. Another thing I found was that being a woman on my own could play out in two ways. One is that some people think that because you are a woman you won't know about power tools and timbers or building terms. I would often see a look of surprise on some men's, and women's, faces when in conversation it would come up that I own and use a wide range of power tools. The second thing I found was that because I was on my own people helped me out when I asked and family and friends often gave me a hand.

I had one incident that stands out for me; it was my lesson on being more assertive, listening to my gut feeling and trusting myself, all of these I didn't really do. I wanted to have timber windows because of the look and feel I was trying to create. All the quotes I got were \$8000 plus, but through some enquiring I found someone who could make them himself. When I got back to him and said to go ahead, he told me all his tools had been stolen in a break-in and he would not be able to do it. He gave me the name of someone else,

who I rang up and spoke to, got a price from and told to go ahead. This was a mistake. I was a bit quick in handing over my deposit. I also didn't take the step of seeing his work and checking with previous clients as to what his workmanship was like. Also, if you get that feeling of being uneasy or that it doesn't feel 'quite right', take it as a sign. He was slow. I had to keep chasing him, and the quality of his work was bad. He read the plan wrongly and made three windows too small, the two sets of French doors were poorly made and one of them blew open in the wind and broke. He did remake that one. I wasn't happy. I didn't speak out at the time and tell him exactly how I felt, but also, looking back I feel that my impatience and other emotions (wanting this all to be done out of excitement) got in the way of common sense and intuition.

My cement blocks and bricks were delivered. I was having two feature walls of the bricks at each end of the lounge/kitchen area; they went from floor to ceiling following the pitch of the roof and in conjunction with the cathedral ceiling I was having in that area. I found someone to lay the blocks and the bricks for me, at what sounded to be a good price, also he had a good reputation for his workmanship.

I had arranged previously for the power to be put on to the block when I moved out with the caravan. At that time the phone cable had been laid part of the way to the house and side-tracked to the van. Water from the creek was used to supply water for brickies and the few trees I had started to plant. The blocks were going up really quickly. The house was starting to take shape. This is also where the fellow doing the windows was a pain. The windows and French doors had to be put in as the blocks were being laid. I had to keep ringing him because we were waiting on them. This was very frustrating at the time. He finally got them there, but not completely finished; some were just the outside frame, but at least we could still keep going.

With the outside shell up I had to arrange for an electrician to come in because conduit had to go down inside the blocks for the wiring, holes had to be drilled into the blocks, and the conduit fed down and pulled through. This was a job that I could do myself, after

having been shown. At the time the slab was laid provisions were made for the power and phone cables to come in under the slab. The blocks had to be reinforced with concrete and steel bars. This was done by pouring buckets of cement down the wall cavity and along the top row of blocks so as to tie it all together. I had help here because this was a big job that involved some heavy buckets of cement.

The two brick walls inside were laid up to just over the height of the blocks, then the roof trusses were stood up at each end of the house, leaving a gap in the middle for the section of exposed beams and timber ceiling. This I found out later created some curiosity from the local passers-by who thought I hadn't ordered enough trusses. A piece of timber called the top plate had to be laid around the top of the blocks over threaded bar which was put in when the reinforcing was done. This is also what the trusses sat on and were fastened to.

I now have to tell you that prior to this I hadn't read a house plan and didn't know any builder's lingo like 'top plate', and 'bird's mouth', which was what I was to find out when doing the exposed beams. The trusses were stood, fastened and braced in a day. I was giving the directions and passing up the trusses to some family members who were on the job that day. It feels pretty exciting when you reach the different stages and the building starts to look more like a house. People asked me frequently, 'How did you know what to do?' What I told them was that I ask a lot of questions if I'm not sure about something, and also I feel that it is just common sense and practicality.

Because of the span of the lounge room, I needed to have either a piece of



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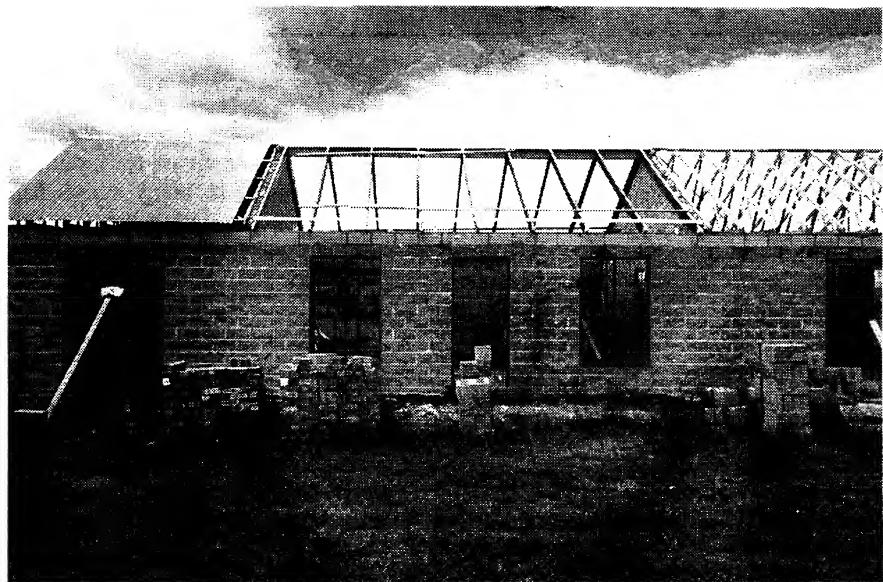
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steel or laminated timber. I chose the steel beam because of the price. I got my friend Pat the builder to put the beam up for me because it had to be in precisely the right spot. The bricks had been laid up to the height of the beam. With that done the next part was the most challenging. The exposed timber beams had to be cut out and fitted into the steel beam, and cut at the other end to sit on the top plate. This is where the 'bird's mouth' lingo comes in because this is what these types of cuts are. All of this had to be worked out, keeping in mind and allowing for lining boards and roof battens, so that everything finished at the same level between the two sets of trusses and eventually when the roofing iron went on.

You can at times come across some would-be helpers, those people who will tell you they can do the job for you and only turn up once or twice. This was one of those occasions. A fellow I had known came out to help me with putting up the timber beams. He cut out a cardboard template for the cut to fit into the steel beam and that was the last I saw of him. I wasn't impressed. The brickie said I could borrow his trestles and planks, so in my impatience I decided I would have a go at putting the timber beams up myself. I set up the trestles and planks at the brick wall where the first beam was going to go and climbed up onto the planks. My legs were like jelly (I don't like heights). The whole thing was shaking, as was the whole of my body. I latched onto the top of the brick wall, holding on for dear life while I edged my way along the planks, and then I ran out of bricks to hang on to as they were now out of my reach. I edged my way shakily along until I finally got to where I wanted to be. I lifted up the timber beam from where I had it leaning against the scaffold and sat it in place to see whether it was right. I had to work out the cut for the end that sat on the top plate.

After several attempts of getting up and down the scaffold, cutting, and back up to check whether it was right – I might add that my fear of heights and shakiness didn't lessen too much either – I finally got the first one up and worked out. I then decided against putting them up on my own because the thought of getting up on the scaffold with no brick wall to hang on to



Mid section of steel beam and timber rafters, ready for the lining boards to go on.

made me feel weak with fear. I would have to find more help with this one.

I cut out all the beams ready and asked my uncle and cousin to help put them up. Meanwhile, I stained them all. I wanted an aged look with the timber beams and lining boards. This was when the distressed timber look was just coming in. I came across a furniture maker who didn't mind telling me some of his trade secrets; up until then I'd had difficulty finding the products to create the look I wanted. I used Feast Watson Fungishield, teak brown stain and a black tar product that is used on the underbody of cars. The Fungishield went on the beams first, then I made up a mixture of the tar and turps (or thinners) to the colour I wanted. I just kept putting it on a scrap piece of timber until I achieved the desired shade. The timber beams were Oregon; I had asked for pieces that had plenty of markings so as to add some extra character. I finished off with a satin sealer just for some protection. Since then I have used black japan to get a similar effect instead of the black tar.

The pine lining boards were done in a similar way, only the black tar wasn't nearly as dark. I only wanted to highlight the knots and markings on the timber. This was a three-step process and involved a lot of work. I had 600 metres of board to do like this, so I did it on the ground to at least make the job a lot easier. At this stage I was beginning to feel some stress about how big a job this house building was, not to

mention being the mother of two teenage sons, living in a caravan, and working as well. I also knew that at this stage I couldn't stop what I was doing because the timber lining boards would warp and so would the other exposed timber. My accountant friend (an owner-builder himself) came up for a visit to see how I was progressing and measured and marked out my starting point for the lining boards and gave me the nod of approval.

I organised some family members again (I come from a big family) to put the lining boards on because this was another of those jobs that required getting up high, it was also one of the most time consuming. I had difficulty at this stage in getting the help I needed. It was the most crucial stage that had to be done as quickly as possible in case of rain, otherwise the boards would warp if they got wet. Also, when the boards are going on you have to keep measuring each side between the boards and the steel beam at the top so that you keep the measurements the same and finish evenly at the beam at the top. The day finally came when I had the boards on and finished. My next step was to put on the roof battens, blanket and roofing iron.

While I was waiting on the iron to be done it happened, the rain came, and not just a passing shower, it had set in. I was in a panic and sick with worry, not knowing what to do. After some phone calls and suggestions of having to get tarps (which I didn't have),

someone suggested the SES. I didn't know whether this came under their definition of emergency, but it sure was mine. I rang them and told them of my situation and they decided that, yes, they could help me out. They came out and got on the roof, covered all the boards with tarps and tied them down. I was so grateful I wanted to cry. I just barely got out the 'thank you' because of trying to fight back my tears. When they left I had my cry. It felt an overwhelming experience at the time and having a cry just seemed to make it feel better so I could get on to the next step.

That next step was finally getting the iron and the guttering. I hoped things would become a bit easier from there. I covered in the ends of the house with an Oregon timber which had a plywood backing. These were in sheets of 1200 x 2400 millimetres and when I cut them they had worked to be a mirror reverse of each other, so I had little wastage.

The bull-nose verandahs on the front and back were put on at a much later stage. Still looking for that rustic look, I had acquired some bricks, which were seconds, for the paving under the verandah. For my front door I chose to have a 920-millimetre opening instead of the usual 820-millimetres. I couldn't find a style of door that suited so I made a Z-braced door out of Oregon, put some black strap hinges on it and later big-headed imitation black nails just to give it that rustic convict look I was after. I felt pretty proud of that door when I made it, and proud of myself also for what I had done so far. Sitting under the verandah watching the storms or relaxing with a beer after a day's work in the yard was another highlight. Being able to sit back looking at something I'd done and saying to myself, 'what a bloody good job I've done', was a feeling of self-satisfaction that made it all worthwhile.

Next time I'll tell you about fitting out the interior, the last and most satisfying stage of my building project. 

## TAKING STOCK

## Solar-Powered Meters

Shepparton was the first Australian city, and the second in the world, to introduce solar powered parking meters. 

# —WHAT'S ON—

Some groups have already organised workshops and seminars for months to come. There are so many events happening for anyone interested in biodynamics or weaving and spinning that it's just not possible to list all of them here! Still, we've given full contact details so you can easily find out more if you wish.

## ORGANIC PRODUCE MARKET

Increasing demand for quality organic produce in the Coffs Harbour area has led to Casuarina Market organisers introducing a 'Just Produce' morning market every third Saturday of the month, from 7.30am to 11am. This market is in addition to the Produce and Artisan market held on the first Saturday of the month. The Breezeway Café will be open for breakfast at the Rudolf Steiner school nearby too. Contact Rowena on 02-6653-8713 for more information.

## **HAND WEAVERS & SPINNERS GUILD**

The Guild's workshops and courses always sound so exciting and are great for creative types. A number of important dates are coming up over the next few months covering subjects like rug weaving, dyeing, tapestry, design, machine knitting and the like. Anyone interested in full details should contact the Guild in your home state: Helen Vonow (SA) on 08-8346-3525, Joy Dove (Vic) on 03-9347-3008 or Diana Macauliffe (NSW) on 02-9150-6954.

## **BUSH FLOWER ESSENCES**

A one-day workshop is being held on 19 May at Kew in Melbourne for anyone interested in exploring the major developmental needs of children. Seminar presenter Kaye Rickard combines Australian bush flower essences, kinesiology, NLP and accupressure in her work with children who have behavioural problems and learning disabilities. Contact Chris Hopper on 03-9844-5379 for full details.

## BIODYNAMICS FOR EVERYONE

Workshops, seminars and tours are all

planned around Australia for the year ahead. These cater for a range of aptitudes, from beginners to those wanting specific knowledge. For the full program contact the Biodynamic Farming & Gardening Association on 02-6655-0566, or check out the website at: [www.biodynamics.net.au](http://www.biodynamics.net.au)

## 2002 WOOLCRAFT COMPETITION

Entries are now invited for this year's Woolcraft Competition. There are 22 classes covering hand-spinning, weaving, machine-knitting and more. Competition entries close at 4.30pm on Friday 31 May and full details about submitting entries can be obtained by phoning Woolcraft on 03-5443-8965, or the Secretary, Australian Sheep Breeders Association on 03-5439-5094. The prizewinning entries will be displayed at the Australian Sheep & Wool Show, being held at the Bendigo Showgrounds in July.

## MIND BODY SPIRIT FESTIVALS

These will be on at the Brisbane Convention Centre from 4 to 6 May, and then at the Sydney Convention Centre from the 16 to 19 May. Entry is \$13 and \$14 respectively, with children under 12 admitted free. With over 200 exhibitors at each festival, features include metaphysical arts, dance, vegetarian cafes, spiritual healers and free lectures. Call 1900-931-798 (though charges will apply), or visit the website at: [www.mbsfestival.com.au](http://www.mbsfestival.com.au)

**BURKE & WILLS**

A travelling exhibition organised by the National Library of Australia in association with the State Library of Victoria is taking place over the next few months. It focuses on the legendary 19th century explorers and their expedition that crossed Australia from south to north. There will be art, relics, scientific specimens, letters and journals. Admission is free, with National Library dates from 27 March to 2 June; the Art Gallery of South Australia from 21 June to 18 August and the State Library of Victoria from 13 September to 24 November. For more information contact 02-6262-1111. \*

# Controlling Poultry Mites

by Megg Miller, Nagambie, Vic.

At this time of year laying hens look really shabby, with bare sunburnt patches of skin appearing on backs and around the vent, or feathers being shed willy-nilly due to moulting. The sudden dishevelled appearance of previously neat looking birds causes concern to many poultry keepers.

Poultry moult – shed their old feathers and regrow new ones – in late summer to autumn in readiness for the cold months ahead. Some shed a few feathers at a time and string out the resting period (they stop laying during moulting) for a month or two, but the most efficient hens lay on until very late autumn and virtually drop all their feathers at once. They appear stressed and miserable, and resemble a porcupine with lots of new feathers coming through simultaneously. Neither the slow moulter nor the hen who drops most of her plumage at once necessarily has bare, reddened or even scabby patches of skin. These signs suggest the presence of irritating parasites and it is important to be able to differentiate between moulting, a once-yearly occurrence, and damage to feather tracts and irritated skin from mites or lice.

A range of external or ‘ecto’ parasites exist which can make a bird’s life hell; a variety of mites and lice, stickfast fleas and ticks. Luckily their periods of intense activity are spread over different times of the year and some show a marked preference for specific climatic or geographic locations.

## BASIC HYGIENE

Presence of ectoparasites isn’t necessarily a sign of poor management, but allowing them to multiply to plague proportions is. Where do these pests come from? Birds may have parasites on them when you purchase them or they may be hibernating in woodwork or crates or boxes. Wild birds like sparrows carry and introduce lice, some mites and ticks and stickfast fleas may be carried by wild rabbits and domestic pets, and ticks live under bark on trees or in old woodwork and

survive several years without feeding.

Control measures need to include inspecting and treating new introductions of poultry, examining woodwork and keeping it dust free, clearing out and composting pen litter after parasite treatment and keeping an eye on birds for signs of irritation, anaemia and unthriftiness. If these are implemented, infestations will not get an opportunity to multiply rapidly. Periodic examination of birds, along with roosts and nest boxes, will indicate which particular parasites are present so the appropriate action can be taken.

## HELPFUL STEPS

If you’re not giving poultry crushed garlic as a prophylactic for worms, consider adding it to wet mash or drinking water at a rate of one clove per two to three average sized hens. Give for several days in a row, once every three to four weeks. Garlic is rich in sulphur compounds and these are believed to offer some protection from parasite attack.

Sparrows, starlings and rats are known to carry numerous species of ectoparasites, so it makes sense to control them. Reduce populations if possible or consider keeping hens permanently enclosed on deep litter in bird- and rodent-proof sheds. This is worthwhile if you cannot get rid of infestations or don’t have the time or mobility to implement regular control measures. Free range sounds wonderful, but if it leaves birds constantly distracted by biting insects with the chance of ill health or death occurring, it is inappropriate for your situation.

## MAJOR PARASITES

### Red Mite

This lives in cracks and crevices of woodwork and comes out at night, scurrying onto roosting poultry and sucking their blood. They proliferate in hot weather, starting in early summer and may reach plague proportions by autumn if not controlled. Heavily



infested adult poultry appear anaemic, off-colour and lay poorly, but it is chickens and growing birds that are most vulnerable. Slow growth and general debility may be experienced, with a predisposition to disease.

Look for red mites by torch light at night, they may be observed on fowls and other poultry species as minute insects crawling over legs, heads and plumage and, when engorged with blood, are red and about the size of a pinhead. In daylight examine under perches or around joins in woodwork. A telltale silvery white powder around these areas points to their presence.

Their life cycle is short in warm weather, complete replication occurring in seven days. They can survive without feeding for eight to nine months, so are difficult to eradicate. Metal sheds and fixtures reduce the opportunities for hiding, but mites have often been found on all-metal layer cages.

So how do you tackle them? Your amenities, not the birds, are the target. Forget about wormwood at the gate and aromatic herbs in the floor litter, red mites are killed by contact. The conventional treatment is spraying with insecticides like carbaryl or maldison, but this will be unsuited to most readers, especially those keeping birds for eggs or meat. The simplest and easiest control is boiling water (and I mean boiling, not hot) poured into cracks and likely hiding spots. Commercial producers use a high-pressure hose with success. Wooden nests should be taken out of the shed if possible and treated twice with boiling water. Take care if you’re tempted to make a mix of an insecticidal oil and boiling water, say tea tree, thyme or even eucalyptus, the strong aroma will cling to the wood for some time and be absorbed through egg shells, which are porous. Oils such as pennyroyal, citronella and tea tree, 25 millilitres of each, mixed with two litres of water make an effective spray used by organic producers. It may leave a lingering odour in the hen

house. It is not clear whether this would have toxic effects if hens used the shed the same day, but this may depend on ventilation and stocking rate. A further caution concerns chickens. Do not use strong oil mixtures on woodwork where chickens sleep, it will undoubtedly prove toxic.

Pyrethrum-based sprays are recommended as an alternative to conventional insecticides. The constituents are absorbed by the insects, destroying the nervous system. Usually, however, commercially prepared sprays also contain piperonyl butoxide which enhances the destructive properties of pyrethrum. It's a moot point whether its presence is advantageous or a concern. It has a number of potentially adverse effects on people when used as a topical treatment for head and body lice. On the other hand, its inclusion in insecticides means greater knock-down success, fewer applications and less build-up of resistance. If you use a pyrethrum-based spray, the easiest to access are garden sprays, but please use appropriate protective clothing and a nose mask.

Neem is often used as an environmentally safe insecticide, especially for plant pests and head lice. Its use in Australia is still largely experimental in terms of recommended concentrations. Neem contains azadirachtins, which are deterrent limonoids and so products made from this plant work by repelling, not killing. With this in mind neem is not going to be effective in controlling mites. They will not be eliminated, but seek refuge in other woodwork like fence posts or trees and reappear when the repellent effects have worn off.

I've used diesel successfully for years when treating numerous sheds at the one time. Two-stroke mower fuel may be a practical substitute. The edge these have over sump oil is that they're brushed onto congregations of mites, kill, and the fumes have vapourised within a few hours. There appears to be no repellent benefits from diesel as mites overlooked during the morning application have been observed moving over treated areas several hours later. Brush dust off woodwork and apply in the morning so fumes have disappeared by the time hens return to roost at night.

Quassia spray is occasionally recommended in books, but rarely are concen-

trations offered nor have I even read of actual knock-down success with killing red mite. Another possibility is kerosene and soap flakes, diluted with water and brushed on. This was used prior to the development of insecticides, the soap being added to assist the mixture's penetration of surfaces. Readers might like to experiment with this.

#### Key Points

- Red mites live in buildings, not on birds, so it is a waste of time to powder or treat birds to minimise infestations.
- They multiply in warm weather so are essentially a summer problem.
- Mites are capable of living off their hosts for many months and if sheds are depopulated will fool people into thinking the parasite has been eliminated. They return as soon as they detect poultry in the shed.
- Whatever treatment is applied, a follow-up is recommended 10 – 14 days later.



#### Northern Fowl Mite

Unlike red mite, this species lives on birds and is regarded as a difficult customer to eradicate. It is thought to be resistant to conventional insecticides. Wild birds are the major vector for infecting backyard flocks and one control measure is permanent deep litter management of the hens with birdproof netting.

You can identify this parasite by examining the vent area. The minute brown mite is difficult for inexperienced poultry keepers to differentiate from a louse. What will make identification easier is the telltale blackening of feathers and irritated and often encrusted skin under the vent. When infestations are heavy you may see these mites on hens' eggs, especially under broodies.

Northern fowl mites have a life cycle of less than a week and are more active in the cold months. They can live for at least a month off their host, and infect all species of poultry. Males, in particular, become heavily infested, perhaps because they spend less time dust-bathing and reinfect the flock continually if not treated. Symptoms are not dissimilar to red mite: anaemia, unthriftiness, slow growth in young stock and reduced resistance to disease.

It is essential birds have access to

dust-bathing. Dried insecticidal herbs can be powdered and added to the dust area, as can a small amount of wood ash. No harm will come from the addition of diatomaceous earth either. This is nontoxic and its razor-like construction has the effect of mechanically injuring insects or interfering with bodily function, resulting in death.

As well, infested birds should be dusted with sulphur powder with two follow-up dustings a week apart. You can also use Pestene, available from produce stores, but as this contains 50 percent sulphur it may be cheaper to just purchase sulphur on its own. The concern with Pestene is the rotenone it contains, there being a possible link between this and Parkinson's disease.

Any dusting should be carried out where good ventilation is present and your airways protected by a mask. Position the bird on its back, resting on a box or table, restraining it with one hand around the leg, so the feathers open out and dust can reach the skin under the vent, on the abdomen and under wings.



#### Tropical Fowl Mite

This closely resembles the northern fowl mite and is concentrated in tropical and subtropical climates. While the life cycle is of a similar duration, this mite lays eggs in nest boxes or in crevices on perches or nearby woodwork. Infested poultry show similar signs to northern mite under the vent area with other affected areas including around the tail and on the neck. These mites will crawl onto humans when in high numbers and may cause temporary irritation. Apply the same measures as for northern fowl mite. ♦

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# When I First Discovered Grass Roots

**What were you doing when you discovered *Grass Roots*? Do you even remember? To some people it's as memorable an event as what they were doing when they heard about the Cuban missile crisis, the death of JFK, or Neil Armstrong walking on the moon. Some long-time readers share their memories.**



## IT STARTED WITH THE COVER

My first encounter with *Grass Roots* was when someone contacted my mother and said I was on the front cover! That was issue 25 and there was an article in it about Ironbark, St Peters Lutheran College's Outdoor Education Centre. Prior to this I'd never heard of *Grass Roots* – now I don't think I've missed an issue since.

*Grass Roots* has complemented my life rather than shaped it and been a source of information and friendships. In the early days, while at university in Townsville, it was a release from books and study. As time passed, with work, marriage and children, it was a source of tips and hints while living in the city. Once we moved and began living on stations, there were still the hints and tips, but now I was able to start contributing some of my knowledge to the magazine to help others. I have made some firm friendships through my contributions. I sometimes meet people who say, 'So you're the Karen Long who writes in *Grass Roots*'.

I think the opportunity to communicate with people and generate friendships is what I'd like to thank *Grass Roots* for in my life. Keep up the good work!

**Karen Long**



## A CATALYST FOR OUR DREAM

I can't remember exactly when I became aware of *Grass Roots*, possibly when my aunt chucked in the urban drag for marginal land and a self-sufficient life in a railway carriage. When we visited, we read her GRs. Later, when she graduated to dairy farmer (age 60!), we inherited her copies – back to the very first issue. But by then we'd been reading it for years. Certainly, Andrew and I were hooked before we married, running up enormous late fines from the library! We were living in inner city Melbourne then, in a little cottage with a paved backyard. But how productive it was! We grew fantastic vegetables and lots of strawberries in polystyrene fruit boxes, while dreaming of more space.

GR was the catalyst for that dream. Although Andrew and I had both grown up in the city, we'd been able to roam freely as children, and we wanted the same freedom for ours to come. GR reinforced that moving to the country was the right choice, while family and friends tried to convince us we were crazy.

In 1990 we bought 2.5 acres at Hanging Rock, outside Melbourne. It has been hard work, transforming bare paddocks into garden, orchard, vegetable patch and home, adding two children and occasional chooks. But we wouldn't change it. We aren't as self-sufficient as we'd like to be, but still try to contribute from the little we are achieving. We can't imagine living permanently anywhere else (currently we're in Dhaka, Bangladesh on contract – more of a contrast you couldn't find – but that's another story), and will keep reading GR in the hope that some of it will rub off.

**Liz & Andrew Zylinsky**



## GROWING UP WITH GR

I first discovered GR when I met Megg, my teacher at high school, way back in the '70s. I thought she had some weird ideas and was just a 'hippie', but loved her and what she taught me. Megg taught me patience and understanding and, although it took me many years to realise this, I have never forgotten those years with her.

I can't remember when I first picked up a GR magazine, it was a long time ago. I do remember thinking, 'This is my teacher, it must be a great magazine if she is writing in it'. From that day till now I have read every issue.

I have learnt so much and am much more open to people's lives and thinking, and try to follow some of the ideas I have read. I have learnt how to cook vegetarian, to care for animals (especially my darling chooks), to build things and, most importantly, to care for our planet. Just as importantly, I have made many good friends and written to many people. It is amazing to me that through *Grass Roots* we meet and write to so many different people and help each other in many different ways. That is what *Grass Roots* is all about, helping each other.

I just can't live without *Grass Roots*. Even if I don't pick the mag up for two weeks, just knowing it's there is a great comfort to me. If I didn't

have GR in my life, I would be the same as everyone else in this world. GR is different, so am I, and that's why I love it! I know whatever information I need *Grass Roots* will have it, if not in this issue, it will be in the next or it was in the last one. I just love it and hope it continues forever, well, for a little while longer anyway.

Skye Crowe

### I'M A GRASS ROOTS DREAMER!

The very first copy of *Grass Roots* I saw was in a library on Queensland's Gold Coast. I immediately fell in love with the warm, earthy toned covers and easy-to-read articles.

The year was 1974, my first son was about to be born, and there was not one high-rise building in sight. Surfers Paradise where we lived was just a small friendly seaside village, the surf on one side and the Nerang River and dairy farms on the other. It was a true paradise: schools of mullet swimming in crystal-clear water, cows grazing, rural bliss, zero crime rate. I will spare you my description of what this paradise has become today, but over the years I began to yearn for the life described in *Grass Roots*.

It took me 30 years of searching to find my new paradise. I design canoes and need water nearby, no crocks, no stingers, no brass monkey weather, no 'progress'.

What I found was Russell Island's Sandy Beach – 1970 Surfers Paradise revisited, and, if I feel like seeing my old stomping ground, I just climb the hills behind my house at sunset and there is the old concrete jungle sparkling on the horizon – an awesome sight – and just close enough, thank you very much.

I often sit and ponder how developers got it wrong. And how these mistakes are being repeated today. That's what reading *Grass Roots* does to you – it turns you into a nostalgic thinker and a dreamer. I'm a *Grass Roots* dreamer, and I'm proud of it.

I have also been called a greenie – and insulted in other ways – for no other reason than that I treasure the giant gum tree that towers above my front lawn. I like to hear and watch the colourful nectar-eating birds and the green tree snakes that hunt them. The stealthy 'whooup – whooup' sounds of fruit bats flying at night tells me that

somewhere in my food forest bananas are ready for the freezer.

I blend these with home-grown pineapple, pawpaw, lilly-pilly, apple, mango and ice cream beans to make a delicious sorbet muesli dessert, 'a most exquisite taste sensation'. For me, the GR dream has come true.

Trevor Wilkins



### OASIS IN A BUSY LIFE

*Grass Roots* came into my life almost at the magazine's inception. My first article (GR 9) on how to make a fairy web shawl, was followed by a major life change with the breakup of my marriage.

Living a basic lifestyle became a necessity, but was also a joy because I discovered the real me. Over the next four years I helped build a house and, though this house was not to be ours, I learned valuable skills. We then squatted for two years, the children and I. Though we knew it was temporary accommodation, we were busy growing vegies and Silky bantams, making jam and bread, spinning wool and sewing and writing.

*Grass Roots* was an anchor, as articles were accepted, friends were made and my confidence grew. We made many items from GR including a duffel coat from an old blanket. Renate, who I later came to know, had included the pattern among her many GR articles. I'm so glad I knew Renate. She died recently, but left a legacy of resourcefulness. So many GR friends, and the filing cabinet is full of their ideas.

I corresponded with Peter and gained an extended family when we married. Twenty-three years later our love of family, craft and renovating

keeps us busy. We enjoy sharing what we can with others, whether it be ideas or tomatoes. Our children are grown and able to turn their hands to many skills. They are valuable community members who appreciate their fortunate lives. We are blessed.

*Grass Roots* means sanity, friendship and an endless learning curve. It has been, and is still, an oasis in the midst of a busy life. Happy birthday all.

Susan & Peter Lendon

### A PROP AND STAY

Congrats on your 150th issue. Marg and I have been readers ever since issue number 1, and not just because we are creatures of habit. I can't remember what got us to purchase the first edition, but it must have been the general philosophy. Both teachers, we were originally Sydney-siders, but our families had rural backgrounds. We had both spent some time holidaying on the farms of relations.

Our early teaching experience was at West Wyalong, and, after a working honeymoon in England, we opted for a return to the bush and were appointed to Richmond River High School at Lismore. Here, after rental accommodation, we bought a three-acre block on the outskirts and settled into rural bliss, acquiring, in due course, chooks, four sheep and, finally, Penelope and Odysseus, our original donkeys. We planted fruit trees and vegies, and obviously needed some sort of prop and stay. Hence *Grass Roots*.

Inevitably, we were encompassed by burgeoning suburbanism and fled to our 17.765-hectare retreat at Rosebank in the hills some 29 kilometres from Lismore. The livestock have succumbed to various ills and the chooks are currently under siege from a variety of predators.

Higher authority points out that I have failed to report that we have a minute macadamia orchard, grow a range of fruit trees and berry vines, have 1000 timber-lot trees and a reafforestation plot of 1000 native rainforest trees. For rest and recreation we grub out lantana and destroy camphor laurels.

Margaret & Peter Carr

### ALWAYS A FINE READ

How well I recall the day I discovered *Grass Roots*. We had just moved to the country from the Perth area and, with

three acres and two hungry kids, plus a head full of organic ideas with worm farms and plants flooding our thoughts, we began. My wife at the time brought the magazine home because she could not find my then favourite, Rodale's *Organic Gardening*. I had also just discovered the *Introduction to Permaculture* by Mollison and Holmgren, so I had two fabulous sources for ideas. I was delighted. GR has inspired me over the years since I came here – starting from Albany, WA, to Kalgoorlie, to Coffs Harbour, NSW, and has helped me to feed and train my sons, both of whom like gardening, organics, conservation, recycling . . . A great mag and always a fine read.

**Robert Millet**

#### **IT'S LIKE AN OLD FRIEND**

I'd like to take the opportunity to tell you all that *Grass Roots* has literally kept me alive in the past. With intense personal problems, I used to motivate myself to read, and in the pages of GR I'd escape to my dream of my patch in the country and everything I hoped to do. There were always such inspirational letters and articles, I could close the last page and be inspired enough to battle on. Thank you so much.

I'm actually using the same technique with my mum at the moment – she is very down – and it seems to be working too! But the wonderful thing is, we are moving to the country this time. My dreaming is becoming a reality. And the funny thing is we're almost being forced to go (financially, not people, we're okay). I can guarantee, every single one of my GR collection will be used – probably to the



point of disintegration! Once again, thank you all so very, very much. What a wonderful world it would be if everyone lived the GR way!

**Lisa Lonewolf Cleghorn**

#### **FLEDGLINGS IN OUR JOURNEY**

I grew up in the thriving metropolis of Melbourne nearly four decades ago. Despite a loving family, great education, and great opportunities to become a 'person of means', I never felt content in the city. I guess I found the superficiality of carrying an image, upholding airs and graces and striving to be more successful (whatever that means) than the next fellow distasteful at some level. I did not like myself nor the society I grew up in.

In the '80s I worked around rural towns and found it different from my sheltered upbringing. Many of the fellows I worked with swore profusely and were crude in other ways. It wasn't till I returned to live in Melbourne in the early '90s I realised that they were nicer more genuine folks than the politically correct staff of the sizeable public service organisation I spent two years in.

It was during those years ('92 onwards) that I chanced upon *Grass Roots* and would immerse myself in it. I'd considered living a self-sufficient lifestyle at times, but it was just fantasy escapist thinking. I'd photocopy articles 'of use for the future' and keep them in a special folder – I was doing a lot of spiritual and holistic searching. It's taken many years to find contentment in my life and self and there is now a determination and strength within me that is unshakable. Life is getting better with each year. It has nothing to do with money – quite the opposite. Reducing my wants and desires has been a great help.

In '96 I decided to go to New Zealand to connect with a good mate and also spend the year on a working holiday. I returned last June! I lived with very little in a 'poor place' – materially that is, yet when times got hard all would be well. I found that people there are more tolerant, less judgmental and more likely to be at peace with themselves. It's not utopia by any means but it is a spiritually rich place. Living with kind-hearted, caring, sharing people has had the effect of rubbing off on me too. I'll return next year as my partner's parents need

help there – they push themselves too hard, bless 'em.

Over the years I've read GR wherever the opportunity arose. I now care for the welfare of the planet, not just for myself. We are only fledglings in our journey to fulfil our goals of self-sufficient, planet-saving, loving persons, but *Grass Roots* has been and will continue to be very important to us for inspiration (others have realised their dreams despite obstacles) and practical advice. Keep up the great work Megg and staff, you are an excellent resource for so many.

**Alex & Rosalyn Harbuz**



#### **MY DEAR GRASS ROOTS FRIENDS!**

I'd like to share my story with you of why I came to love my *Grass Roots* mag. For the last 25 years I've never missed an issue! I came to live on lovely King Island in 1970. I was as green as the grass and I had no idea about farm life, having been born in Heidelberg, Germany, a beautiful old city.

King Island is a very special place to me. I believe I've spent the most happy and peaceful part of my life there, which I shared with my friend Keith and his parents on the farm.

I spotted my first *Grass Roots* on the shelf at the newsagency. I've been hooked ever since. I have learnt so much from the stories people shared with all of us, advice which was given, and so much more. I can only say, *Grass Roots* is an outstanding mag and really priceless. Over the years I have introduced it to many others and my family and friends are all fascinated by the useful information and good advice.

I wish to thank Megg and Co and everyone for such a wonderful great magazine. Keep up the good work!

**Ruth Rosenau**

# Going Potty With Veggies

by John Mount, Woodford, Qld.

I often hear city and suburban folk wistfully remarking about how lucky country folk are with their gardens and crops, wide open spaces, and fresh country air. The fresh air and wide open spaces I will not dispute, but growing country crops is not always easy, nor profitable! Those city folk who find it difficult to come to the country to live can, in some small measure, bring a country garden to the city!

The tiniest balcony, verandah, or backyard can support a mini-crop of fresh vegetables. The main ingredients are soil, sun, water and, naturally, containers. Commercial plant pots are ideal but not indispensable. Take a look around your home and you will find handy containers everywhere. I've seen food plants grown in everything from paper cups, to discarded toilet cisterns and bath tubs. Plastic and cardboard milk containers are perfect, just cut the tops off, punch some tiny holes in the bottom for drainage, throw in some soil and those seeds you purchased at the supermarket or nursery, or exchanged with other *Grass Roots* readers. Then place the containers in the open, water regularly, and give the appropriate TLC as your garden grows.

Because of the compactness of your garden 'plot' you should easily detect any insect marauders before they do much damage. If your own soil is unsuitable, take some buckets with you to the local nursery and explain to them that you want rich loamy soil without



Don't think you have to stop at herbs or vegetables, even dwarf fruit trees can be grown in pots.

any chemical additives. Potting mix can be bought at supermarkets. Buy a good brand, but you will still need to add fertiliser at regular intervals.

A sandy potting soil in a deep container placed in a sunny aspect supplies all the basic needs for carrots. In warm climates with mild winters carrots can be grown nearly all year round, though they usually grow from early spring to autumn.

Lettuce likes a well-drained potting mix in a long container with seedlings spaced approximately 15 to 20 centimetres apart. Open-hearted varieties thrive in containers and will keep producing new leaves over an extended period.

Tomatoes grow well in both sandy and clayey soil and like well-rotted

compost. Plant early to mid spring. Place one plant per container, with a stake for tying to later inserted at time of planting.

Citrus trees, a range of dwarf fruit trees and fruit salad trees can all be successfully container grown. Don't be afraid to experiment. If you need extra information, the local library or nursery should be able to help. Your rewards will be fresh fruit, vegies, a saving of money on your food bill, and most importantly, a healthier lifestyle!

For more articles relevant to gardening where space is limited see the following back issues. Gardening for flat dwellers, GR 76; fruit salad trees, GR 116; balcony garden GR 126; small area gardening, GRs 122, 127, 128. ¶

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# RECYCLING RUNS RIOT

## Packaging

by Roberino, Arrawarra Beach, NSW.

Every year we throw out over one million tonnes of packaging. Packaging is a relatively new fashion and adds to the price of the contents, sometimes quite dramatically. It costs a lot of money in the actual manufacture, design, factories, distribution and so on. It's a shame that so much effort goes into what is only waste after we consumers unpack the item we wanted in the first place. We have paid for the packaging and the first thing we do is throw it away. Not really bright, eh?

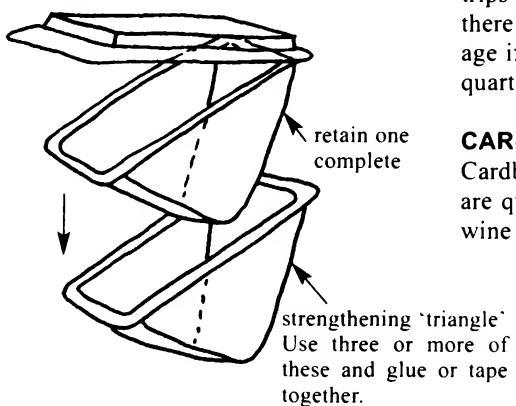
Packaging at the turn of the century was lovingly recycled and highly prized, think of flour and sugar bags and timber fruit boxes. Today we have become so throw-away oriented that you wonder whether we waste more than we use.

### LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTIC

Many packaging containers are made of clear or at least translucent plastic. That's good if you can reuse the containers, because you can see what is inside and don't have to spend time labelling and checking when you go to use the contents. Much packaging is extremely well designed, tough, easy to handle, a convenient size and shape and light in weight.

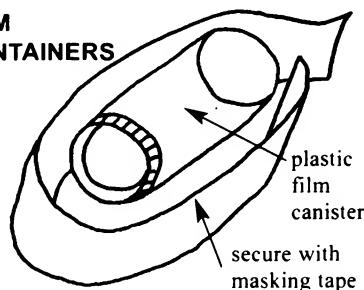
If containers are not strong, such as biscuit trays of lightweight clear plas-

### Triangle Sandwich Containers



tic, fit a few inside each other until the required strength is attained. Sandwich 'triangle' containers have a strong lid but a weak 'triangle'. I cut off the lids and triple the triangles to get the required strength, then the last one, with lid, goes inside the strengtheners. Two pieces of masking tape hold the lot together. I find these good for organising small nails, screws, craft items, nuts, washers in the workshop. The strong lids make excellent trays for mixing epoxy glues, as artwork organisers, small paint trays for small jobs and so on.

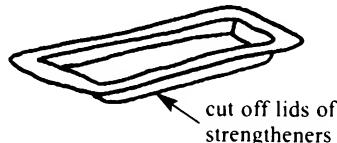
### FILM CONTAINERS



Clear plastic film containers are very handy items, and free from any photo processing shop. I use them for small amounts of liquids, such as paints for touch-up jobs. I've even sent strange spiders and insects in the post to the museum for identification in these! They are handy for taking small amounts of things on holidays or short trips too. Securely tape the lids on if there are liquids that could cause damage if the tops pop off, and only three-quarters fill them!

### CARDBOARD TUBES

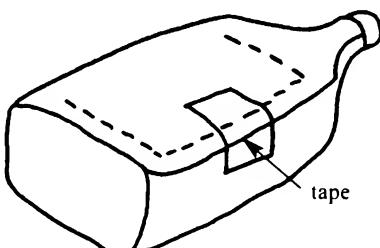
Cardboard tubes from foil or clingwrap are quite strong and the rubber taps of wine casks fit each end perfectly. They



are good for storing important documents without folding, such as birth and marriage certificates, wills, insurance policies and other legal contracts. Wrap well with something water- and vermin-proof if you intend to bury them. I know people do bury things and are most dismayed when they dig them up, all wet, stained, insect eaten and so on. Better still, use a recycled bottle with a good lid.

### MARGARINE TUBS

Recycled 500-gram margarine buckets are good for keeping small steel items which are likely to rust if not kept airtight. I don't clean these out before use as the small amount of margarine coats the objects, fish hooks for example, and really ensures against rusting. The top piece of greaseproof paper is ideal for wrapping the hooks in for your fishing tackle box and the fish don't seem to mind the flavour.



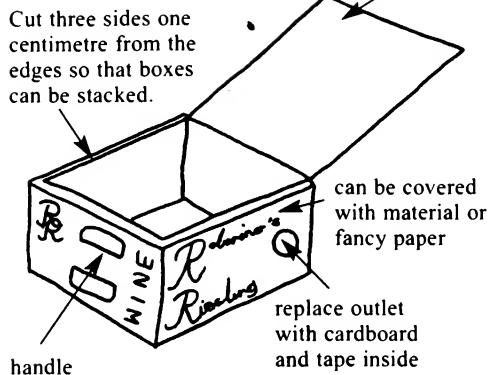
### OIL CONTAINERS

Car engine oil five-litre plastic containers are very handy for storing nuts and bolts if you cut out one side (partly). The small amount of oil always remaining also helps coat the items and prevents rusting, also promoting easy cleaning when reassembling something. Tape the flap closed to prevent any loss.

### WINE CASKS

Recycle wine casks into toolboxes and treasure chests. 'Where's that XYZ@!!\*' screwdriver, pliers, scissors,

### Wine Casks



etc?' The cry runs around the world. Having a few simple tools in a place where they can be retrieved cuts any job in half, or another way of viewing it is that you can do twice as much in one hour. Wine cask boxes are strong, have an in-built handle and are cheap (if they are empty).

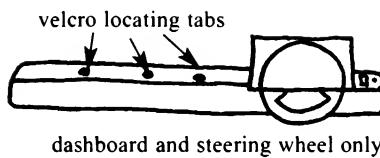
Cut three sides one centimetre in from the edges and you've got a handy place to keep things. Tape up the outlet hole. These treasure chests are stackable and portable.

### MILK CONTAINERS

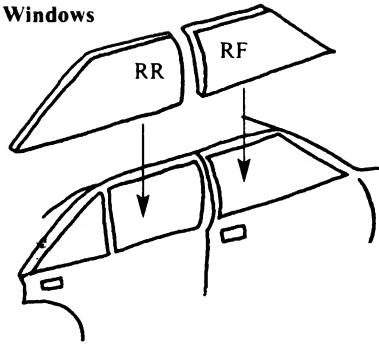
Two-litre and three-litre plastic milk containers make great pest-proof food containers when out in the mustering camp. Flour, pasta, dried fruits, sugar, nuts, salt etc become safe from ants, cockroaches, flies, goannas, crows, rats, mice and so on. Back at the ranch you can still use them and even store them in the fridge or freezer, thus preventing any weevil or grub eggs from hatching, and keeping the food fresher, of course. Any grain is easily stored in them and the kids don't think to look in them for your favourite chocolates! Jenny Craig will not be happy with you

hinged lid

### Internal Method

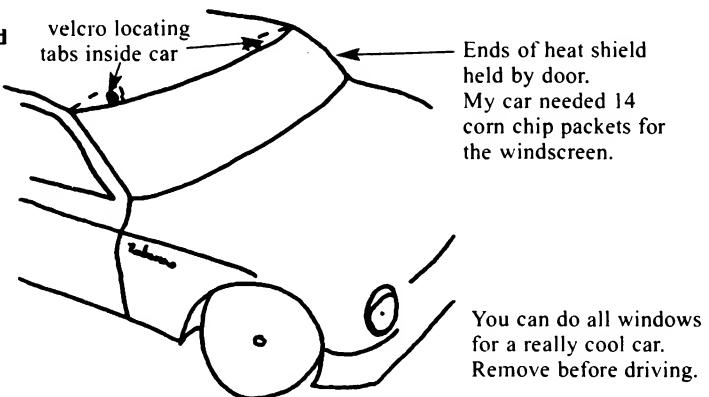


### Other Windows



### Front Windows

#### External Method



though. They can be buried and remain waterproof and can be used as a safe deposit for the marriage certificate (what marriage certificate?), car rego papers and IOUs.

### FOIL CHIP BAGS

Here's a riotous recycling idea. As the hot weather approached I was thinking of how to stop the car's steering wheel from being scorching hot. I was also wondering what I could do with my huge pile of silver bags that were once full of delicious corn chips. Eureka! What an idea! I cut two corn chip 230-gram packets open and taped them together with packaging tape to form one big bag that neatly fitted over the top of the steering wheel. I remove it when I want to drive the car.

I also cut open and joined together six packets to form a dashboard cover, silver side upwards to reflect the heat. At a hardware store I bought six small patches of velcro, gluing the 'hooked' ones to the front of the dashboard and the matching 'loops' to the reflective packets. I've also made a large cover for the windscreens which is about 40 centimetres longer than the width of

the windscreens and is held in place by closing the front doors on its ends one at a time. It works very well and it really stands out in the parking lot so I don't lose my car anywhere. I know you can buy all these readymade, but with the money I've saved I can buy lots more corn chips.

Slip-over covers for door windows make fitting and removing a quick job. Labelling LF/LR will prevent mix ups. Back window, same procedure as for the windscreens. I strengthened all edges of the foil with the packaging tape to prevent tearing. ¶



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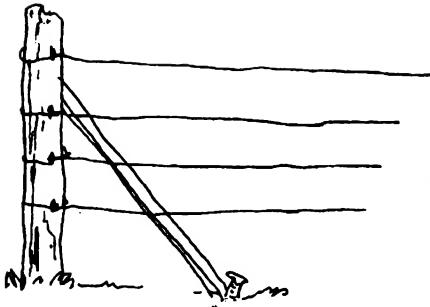
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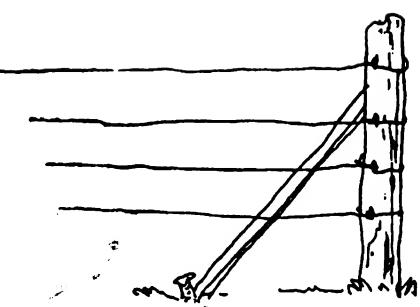
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# Fence Straining

by Ken Cooper, Murrurundi, NSW.



Most old bushmen have learnt the way to strain a fence. Of course, there's not much use trying to strain a wire onto a post that is going to pull over, so it has to be well in the ground and well stayed.

There are three traditional ways. One is to put the post in the ground 900 millimetres for a corner strainer or end strainer (gate post) and stay it at an angle towards the line of strain. The end of the stay, a solid pole 3.35 metres long, is let into the strainer post about 100 millimetres at one end and the other (larger) end is buried at the same angle to a depth of 600 millimetres up against a solid block of wood or stone buried the same depth. Another method is to bury a 'dead man' just below the surface at right angles across the strainer post on the side of strain. Of course, the best stay of the lot, especially when you intend to run horses in the paddock, is to put in another post 1.8 to 2.4 metres along the line of strain and mortice the top of both posts. Then lay a rail from mortice to mortice, which are cut into the tops of the posts or the inside 15 centimetres. This mortice is about  $\frac{2}{3}$  the width of the rail, and  $\frac{2}{3}$  the depth, to allow the sap to be trimmed off the rail. Then a heavy wire is twisted from the top of the second post to the bottom of the strainer post to hold the whole show rigid. This means the strained wire would have to move both posts, still in an upright position, along the line of strain to slacken the fence.

In a corner, with the top rails going both ways, the corner becomes highly visible to horses. If a horse runs into it, or is bumped from behind by another galloping horse, it hits the round rail instead of the wire. Of course, a running strainer in a straight fence doesn't need a stay, as the wire is strained from

both sides at the same time.

Some strainer posts are bored, but some types of timber are acidic and hard on wire. In that case the wire is wrapped around the post. It is useless to just wrap the wire around itself, as the angle of the tie will allow the strain and/or a beast hitting the wire to unravel the knot. So, the wire is taken around the strainer, the end taken over the main wire, the end pushed through, over and under, then brought over itself and twisted around the long part. There is no need to do this hard up against the post; give yourself a bit of room until you're ready to twist, then bump the half-done knot up against the post by sliding the knot along the wire, then twist the loose end around the main wire. Don't forget the other end of the strain!

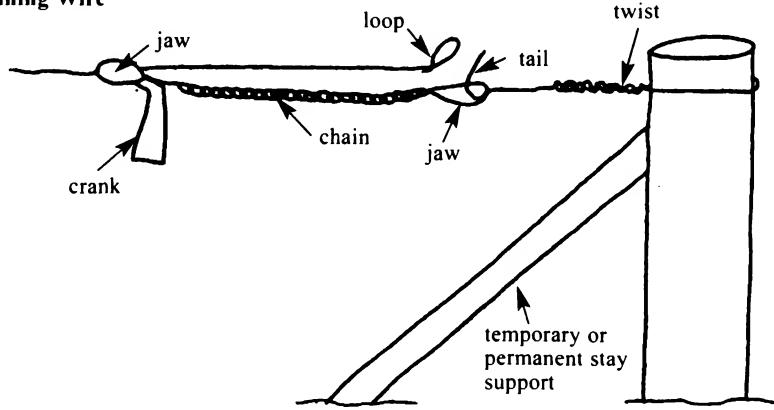
Then it is usual to cut the wire a convenient distance from the strainer post. Put one end in the jaws of the straining implement, hook the chain to the ratchet. Put the other end in the jaws of the other half of the implement (they are actually called strainers) and lever away. The first strand of wire put in the jaws is the long one. Give your-

self 15 centimetres spare and turn it upright to tie the wire off. Then, when the wire is tight, put a loop in the short end, so that it is just the right length to almost slip over the end of the short bit sticking up from the jaws. Give the handle of the strainers another half crank, and slip the loop over the short bit. Turn the short bit over towards the long wire and twist it so that you have a loop inside the first loop. Then let the handle of the strainers let off the pressure on the wire and the wire should remain tight.

The professionals walk back along the wire in between pulling it up with the strainers and putting in the first loop and pull the wire away from the line of strain to make sure there are no kinks or slack bits along the line. A strain of fence is generally 100 metres.

Barbed wire is strained before it is tied to iron pickets. It's strained to a 'tail' of plain wire off the strainer posts, and is pulled in the middle to test for kinks, too, but wear heavy gloves or pull it with a hook of plain wire. If it breaks or lets go quickly it could have a devastating effect on your hands. High tensile barb is the worst

Straining Wire



and most unpredictable.

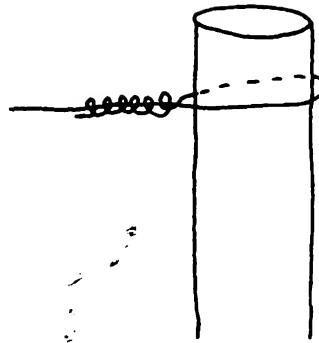
There are other ways to strain the wire off at the strainer posts. Tie a longish piece of wire around an undrilled strainer post, with the end looped through the bit around the strainer and twisted around the wire end leading back down the fence. This is called a plain wire tail. Hook the stationary end of the strainers on the tail and bend the tail up, giving yourself enough wire to loop the end over and twist it around the tail where the wire, plain or barbed, is tightened. Then strain the long fence wire, put a loop in the end which will just slip over the tail with another half crank and loop the tail wire over to tie it off.

If the post is bored, with the top hole above the stay, a forked stick can be used as a straining implement. It will need a reasonably wide fork, and must be strong, but not too thick for your hands. Push the wire through the hole in the post, through a hole in the stem of the forked stick, and turn the fork hand over hand, twisting the wire around the stem until it is tight. Then a plug is driven into the hole in the post to hold the wire while the forked stick is unwound. The plug must be driven in the same side of the post as the implement to stop the wire sliding through. Then the wire is taken around the post twice and wrapped around the main wire. This way there is no need to cut the plain wire, only to put a tail on the barbed wire. Attach the tail to the barb with a figure-8 knot.

A forked stick can be made from two pieces of water pipe welded into a 'T'. Don't forget to drill a small hole for the wire to go through.

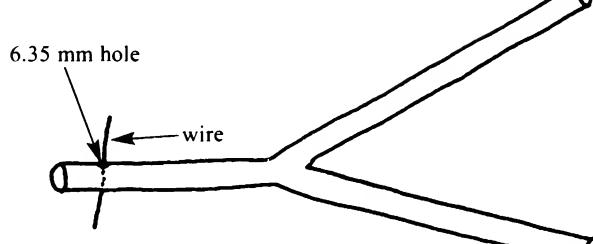
Strain the top wire first and work down. This prevents the wires fouling.

#### Wire Tied To Post



Loose end over main wire then under behind the loose end back over the main wire and wrap around it.

#### Forked Stick Strainer



For more about fencing with a forked stick see GR 143, and GRs 118 to 122 had a comprehensive series on fencing. ¶

#### DEAD MEN?

In GR 114 Michelle Edwards described how to use a device known as a 'dead man' instead of the usual strainer stay. It is a log about 90 cm long and 16 cm in diameter that is buried firmly against the strainer post (making a T-shape) on the side that will be taking the greatest pull from the wire. Dig a hole about 40 cm deep and the same shape as the log. Place the log in, backfill and ram the soil around it. This is a good method for goat keepers to use, there being no diagonal strainer post for the goat to walk up. ¶

#### TRACTOR TYRE RECYCLING

Old tractor tyres have many uses other than the one for which they were intended; you are only limited by your imagination. They are cumbersome and difficult to dispose of, but one man gets around this by making livestock mineral feeders from his old tyres. He closes up one side of the tyre with aluminium sheeting. Beading cement is applied around the bead of the tyre and an aluminium circle with holes drilled around the edge is screwed on top of the cement. The feeder is then mounted and bolted onto two treated wooden posts, set into the ground about 1.3 metres apart, facing a direction that the wind seldom blows from during rain, and at a 22° angle to avoid rain getting into the feed. The bottom of the tyre is set on a concrete block halfway between the posts.

Another farmer has made water troughs from his old tyres. He chainsawed away the top rim, first making sure the tyres were not steel belted. A concrete seal was used to make the base of the trough. He believes there has been a reduction in levels of injury to his stock.

Can you think up any nifty ideas for those old tractor tyres? ¶

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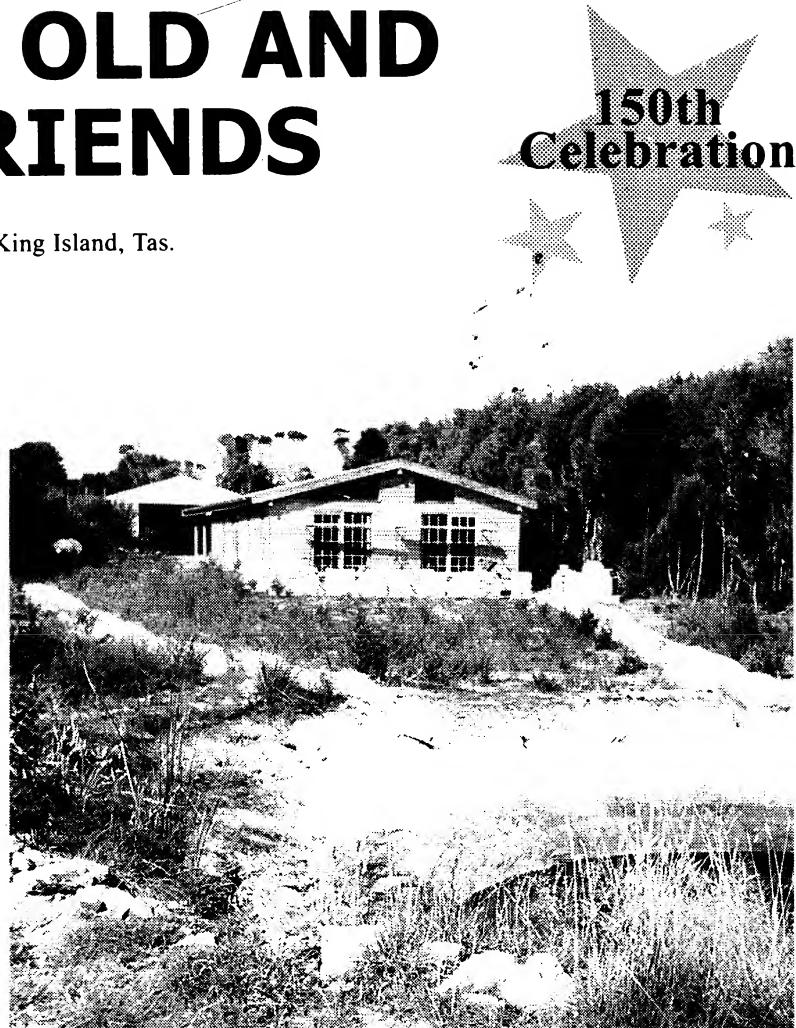
# HELLO TO OLD AND NEW FRIENDS

by Robyn Eades, King Island, Tas.

I can't really believe it's eight years since issue 100, and now it's 150 – seems just like a few months really. Here's another round of congratulations and a hello to friends old and new. Back then I was waiting for a big new adventure; little did I know, it was really about to happen.

First, I began a new career! A friend begged me to try teaching her children the piano and I found it one of the most delightful things to do – and I get paid! Watching my own children participate in our fantastic concert band program made me want to do it myself, so I went into the beginner's band with my sister's little clarinet. In intermediate band I switched to the bass clarinet, and eventually moved to senior band. We have lots of adventures with visiting tutors, summer schools and tours. Last year we took a bus to Alice Springs and played our music wherever we could along the way.

I also play piano (mostly) with another group called the King Island Musicmakers. We do dances, balls and any other special celebrations. I've certainly learnt lots about chords, keeping time and playing to be heard. I had one year of playing keyboard in the big band offshoot of the concert band. It was great fun, but I have to try to limit my 30-kilometre trips to town to a minimum and two trips a week is really



The new house, BarnArk, is constructed of timber milled from the farm Robyn grew up on. Robyn's son helped with the building and now lives there.

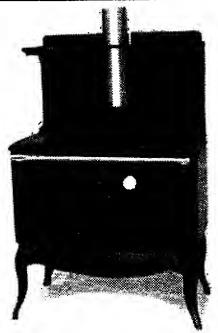
quite enough now that our fuel is well over the dollar per litre.

In the summer holidays I became the prompt for the annual drama club production and this year I even have a part – piano player in the French restaurant of 'Allo, Allo'. You can see

that music is very important in my life these days.

The next big adventure was the threat of a sand mine. My little home-made house is in an area that has twice been mined for rutile and the present leaseholders decided to have another

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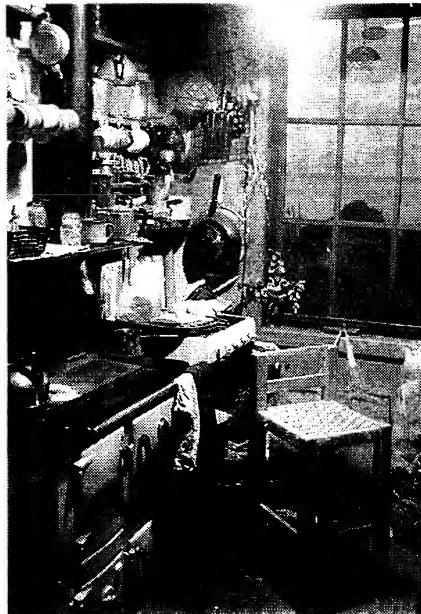


go. They persuaded me that I would have to leave and I eventually sold up to them. I then had to rush around buying land again and having a new house built. I was too worn out to do it myself again, but I planned it — trying to remember all sorts of GR hints and ideas — and a local builder did all the hard work. This included cutting and milling trees my father had planted on the farm where I grew up, so the new house still has sentimental connections.

I couldn't imagine how I would ever manage without my kitchen window view of Sea Elephant Bay and the Naracoopa jetty, so I took film after film of photos and hung one in a frame above the kitchen sink of the new house. (It is a double sink to make up for the years of not having one at all at Naracoopa. A friend's daughter still calls me the lady without a sink.) The sand mine people said they would move all my 'stuff', including piano, but five years later they still have not started mining and I have not moved.

My son came home from Canberra, got a job working for the builder, and decided that 'BarnArck', the new house, was a very convenient place for him to live. His Canberra cousins also found it a good place when they came to try their hands at King Island life. They got jobs, played football, and have both taken King Island girls with them to live in places where you can drive further to have fun. Martin is still there in the 'other house'. My daughter, Jeanette, has bought a house in Canberra and has to work hard to pay the mortgage. We hope she will have time to visit the Island this year.

I have given up house-minding, but several near neighbours regularly need me to feed a variety of animals. My



A glimpse of Robyn's sea view from the kitchen window of her Naracoopa house without a sink.

own cat died last year, but I have just acquired a new bundle of pink fluff and am attempting to train her in my ways. She met the 'tame' wallaby and a bluetongue lizard yesterday and was greatly amused.

My poor old bus had a transplant, but that only lasted a couple of years. Now it sits quietly rusting away in my Naracoopa yard, still functioning as guest bedroom and sewing/craft storeroom.

King Island is till dog-paddling along here in Bass Strait. The tax department finally realised we can't just pop in a car and drive here and have declared us a special zone (only about 50 years late!). I can listen to Classic FM if there is an easterly wind, but have to switch to Victorian TV oth-

erwise. More big wind towers are being installed this year. The cows are still giving plenty of milk and, last but not least, the Naracoopa jetty is going to be demolished. No one but the odd (!) fisherperson needs it now. It is too old and too hard to fix and someone might hurt themselves on it. So there goes our only fresh fish supply. I can't afford to run a boat or travel 30 kilometres on the chance of a bite . . . and, oh dear, no more fresh squid lunches. I learnt quite a bit about mediation and conducting myself in a diplomatic manner in the campaign to save the jetty.

My small solar power system continues to serve me well, but it's a bit recalcitrant when it comes to running a fridge. I did use gas, but that's up to over \$90 per bottle now, for about three months' use. I might have to think about a small wind generator again because the wet canvas backpack in the tree is not really that good at keeping the milk cold.

I still make soap and spin wool, and even do a bit of knitting — fingerless gloves and feathery triangular shawls are the best sellers. I got Martin to make me an excellent fringe-cutter recently. It's just a piece of seven-centimetre plastic downpipe with a slot cut in it. You wind thread round and round, slip scissors into the slot, snip, and there are the pieces all ready to fringe a shawl or scarf or whatever. I must admit, I wonder a bit at this process. I mean, I have spent hours spinning the short staples of wool into one long thread and then I cut it up again. Must be symbolic of something!

So much more I haven't mentioned, but I've got to go into town for play rehearsals tonight so I'd better take this and post it at the same time. ¶

## Thinking of Homeschooling?

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We would like to network with those who currently homeschool — or are thinking of homeschooling — so we can encourage one another and uplift one another, as we all make a stand to separate ourselves from the harshness of today's corrupting education system.

Getting in contact with other homeschoolers is important, because it also enables those of our offspring who have finished their schooling to meet up with others of like minds and values. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Homeschool-Link Australia, GPO Box 1926, HOBART TAS 7001

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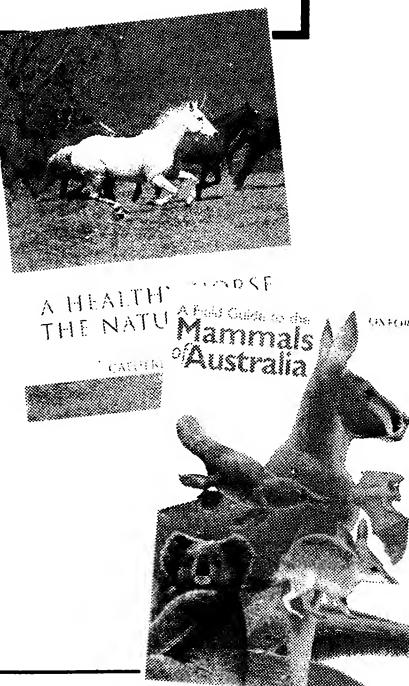
## RECENT RELEASES

Titles described can be ordered through your nearest bookstore.

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P/b, 240pp, New Holland, 14 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest 2086. Ph: 02-9975-6799. RRP \$34.95.



### COMPLETE ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO THE HOLISTIC HERBAL David Hoffman

This is just one title in a series of Complete Illustrated Guides. Others include aromatherapy, feng shui, massage, reflexology and shiatsu. They are colourful and easy to read with plenty of information boxes and lists, designed for an international English-speaking audience. In this particular title there is a background to herbal medicine and how it works; a listing of over 200 herbs and how they can be used; plus a therapeutic index listing specific herbs for diseases. There are numerous practical recipes and a look at the systems and major organs of the body (circulatory, digestive, skin) and how specific herbs can help maintain health in these areas.

P/b, 256pp, Element, HarperCollins, 25 Ryde Road, Pymble 2073. Ph: 02-9952-5000. RRP \$32.95.

### GARDENER'S COMPANION TO WEEDS Suzanne Ermert & Leigh Clapp

This is a handy weed identification guide and provides helpful advice on controlling over 150 common weeds and invasive plants in Australia. People pay good money for some of the plants outlined, but later find gardens have been taken over by their pretty purchase. Each entry includes colour photo, specific control methods, habitat and dispersal methods. The weeds are divided into five sections: aquatic, lawn, garden, pastureland and wasteland, and invasive plants, with entries listed alphabetically by botanic name. The benefits of chemical, biological and physical methods of weed control are covered in detail too.

P/b, 240pp, New Holland Publishers, 14 Aquatic Drive, Frenchs Forest 2086. Ph: 02-9975-6799. RRP \$32.95.

### AUSTRALIAN OUTBACK

Scott Forbes (Ed)

Published in conjunction with Insight Guides and Discovery Communications primarily for an American audience, this colourful, beautifully photographed guide will certainly liven your appetite for that holiday round Australia, a trip into the interior, or even an island adventure. Seventeen specific destinations are covered by a range of experienced travel and nature writers who have first-hand knowledge of the areas. Each destination includes travel tips such as lodging, camping and tours, as well as interesting excursion ideas to significant spots closeby. Selected locations are Australia-wide and include Kangaroo Island, Lamington National Park, the Kimberley and the MacDonnell Ranges. All are outlined with particular reference to the wildlife and ecology of the areas.

P/b, 224pp, Universal Press, PO Box 1530, Macquarie Centre 2113. Ph: 02-9857-3700. RRP \$27.95.

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P/b, 269pp, Oxford University Press, GPO Box 2784Y, Melbourne 3001. Ph: 03-9934-9123. RRP \$39.95.

### THE TRAVELLER'S FRIEND

Alan Richardson

Most of us have had a holiday that was not all we had hoped; maybe the luggage was lost in transit, there were extra costs for the car rental, or even (lately) airlines going broke. Richardson offers a complete troubleshooting guide for Australian travellers – even to the extent of providing 15 model letters intended to get results, you simply fill in the gaps. Traps for the unwary are identified, step-by-step pointers are given for handling situations where plans go off the rails, and your legal position as a consumer is outlined in detail. Richardson has had 12 years experience working with a major regional airline and in the travel industry.

P/b, 220pp, Hospitality Press, 38 Riddle Parade, PO Box 426, Eisternwick 3185. Ph: 03-9528-5021. RRP \$24.95.



## DOWN HOME ON THE FARM

by Sunshine Miller.

What excitement this month! Marcel and I finally caved in and, with our first-home-buyer's grant burning a hole in the bank, we organised a builder, electrician and plumber to do over the cottage. The priority was getting an inside toilet. Frankly, the old outside dunny didn't appeal. I've been there, done that. It was all quite charming when growing up, with the chooks wandering past and no one around for miles. But the new place is in a tiny town and, while we're on three-quarters of an acre, I do have neighbours. Plus, my city pals take one look at it and refuse to enter. After a few boozy lunches in the garden, they were leaving very cross-eyed. Last of all, Marcie has been terrified of standing on a snake on the toilet floor in the dark. It's not an outrageous thought, as they do like the cool concrete floors on hot nights. In my childhood, snakes were frequently found curled in and around the toilet. I don't know which would be worse, a snake; the frog that used to leap out with every flush; the confused user wondering where it came from, them or the loo; or the ominous noise in the dark. The most notorious noise occurred at an old house Megg and David lived in years ago, which had a bench seat in the outside dunny. The uninitiated, going out at night to sit in dim light, would hear a low, hair-raising 'brrrk' beside them on the bench, and hastily leave, pants at knees. It was just a friendly old rooster who liked to sleep there each night. The hen slept on the floor and would brush against the legs, equally horrifying. So, with these legends colouring my childhood, and the refined nature of my friends, an inside toilet seems well deserved.

Our lovely builder has attended to that, replaced a few ugly aluminium windows with the drop-sash variety to match the rest of the house, added some doors, and put a beam in to stabilise the load-bearing wall Marcel and I enthusiastically knocked out earlier. It really didn't look load-bearing, but when the roof began to sink . . . well, I admit, I was wrong on that one.

Marcel and I went to the recycling yard and purchased the windows and



The deep back veranda is perfect to sit and rest under, with a cool drink, and take stock of our weeding progress.

doors we wanted a few days before the builder was due. Although we measured the spaces to fill three times, our measurements were all different, we kept losing the notebook, and we forgot to mark whether figures were width or height. So we wandered around and tried to tell by eye which windows would be suitable. Frankly, we just picked ones we liked the look of. Luckily, we weren't far off; perhaps all that measuring did some good.

Then there was the problem of how to get the windows home, as the yard didn't deliver to the country. I found out Megg was dropping off some turkeys in the Yarra Valley, so I offered to accompany her in the van and we did a little detour to the recycling yard. Unfortunately, Megg tipped one of the turkeys upside down before the trip, and upset its digestion. By the time I hopped in the van, believe me, it smelled rotten. We got to baste in the rich aromas of raw turkey poo for two hours, then thankfully dropped them off to the unsuspecting recipient. Another hour to the window place; turkeys gone, but the aroma stayed.

I grabbed two manly looking fellows and pointed out my prepaid windows. No worries, they said, and we backed up the van. Their faces changed

when they opened the back; they couldn't believe turkeys could smell so bad! The men heaved the two doors in first, then went on to the three sets of windows. Oh dear. The windows would have to go first. Out came the doors again and in went the first window. Didn't fit. They measured the van, then all the windows, and we realised that two sets of windows would have to stay behind. With no other opportunity to pick them up before the builder was arriving to fit them, and nothing else to transport them in anyway, I was getting a little agitated.

The men loaded the one window that fitted, then the two doors, realised they were precariously placed, pulled them out again, and reloaded them with one man well inside the van. When he slipped in fresh turkey poo and fell underneath the doors and windows, unable to get up, I had to go and stand amongst the pedestal sinks and pull myself together. Needless to say, it took far longer than expected. We took what we had home, and realised we had no way of getting them out, so Megg drove around in a van full of doors and windows for three days.

At last we were able to organise to get Marcel and the builder, with their bulging male muscles, to remove them.

Or so we thought. The builder said it was the heaviest window he'd ever come across, and they barely managed to lift it. Luckily, his assistant had accompanied him, or it would be in Megg's van still. When I told him the fellows from the second-hand place had pulled the doors and window in and out three times, he couldn't believe it. They may not have been organised, but they sure were strong!

Luckily, we were able to borrow the builder's trailer for the remaining windows and all went well. Then the builder asked for the jam. What was this, I asked Marcel, morning tea? He had no idea, but thought it was something to do with a door. Three phone calls later I knew what a doorjamb was. Believe me, the fruit type would be cheaper.

The builder was actually very good about our limited budget, ringing us frequently to ask if we were capable of sanding the plaster, clearing up and managing tip runs ourselves. Marcel rashly said he could do all that and more. We'll soon see. I was pleased to spy an article in this issue about drop-sash windows; I will definitely get him reading that one.

Next, the electrician will rewire and put in a safety switch, something I'm quite excited about. Not only will electricity mean lights, but a washing machine! I have one, but no laundry space or plumbing in my matchbox-sized city house. All these years Marcel has been taking our washing back to his mum's house to do there. (Well, he *says* he does it.) Now we can do our own washing. At ages 27 and 28, it's been a little embarrassing telling friends that Mother still did it for us.

Last of all, the plumber will connect us to the sewerage system, and then we will be renovated, lit and plumbed. After waiting 10 months, I can hardly believe it is all coming together at last. Of course, there is plenty left for us to do – painting, sanding etc. Then there's the pergola and fishpond I've been dreaming about. Pablo the cat, who is becoming quite used to weekends in the country, will like that. I wonder if his city cat friends believe his stories about an oasis of green grass, trees and birds, sadly all seen from behind a glass (drop-sash) window as I don't want to lose my birdlife (or my cat).

It's been an odd summer, living partially in Melbourne and partially in the

country. I'd take off from Melbourne in the morning in pouring rain, thinking, 'ripper, no need to water today'. As soon as I crossed the Dividing Range, it would be all bright sunshine and blue skies. After months of this, going to the cottage to water for a few hours in the hot sun after work, then driving back to rainy Melbourne, well, I started to find it downright insulting. The irony; rain all right, but always at the wrong house. Other readers who have done the weekender thing may know the frustration. It really has been terribly dry here, our tank holds nothing but dust and most of the farmers have been reduced to buying water.

All the same, the zucchinis continue to arrive with horrifying regularity, I'm getting to the point where I can't face another one. They've been sneaking their way into everything: spaghetti, curries, soups, muffins, frittatas, salads, cake, for too long. I even think I'm starting to see a greenish tinge to my skin. I picked my first pumpkin and made soup on the weekend, quite a change from when I was a child and pumpkin soup had to be disguised by all sorts of strange pseudonyms before I would eat it.

When does pumpkin season end? Mine have exploded from their generous patch, climbed through the tomatoes, crossed the lawn, and are reaching over the fence. Watch out neighbours! I hardly dare walk through them to get to the other vegies, I can just see them twirling a frond around my ankle and pulling me down, buckets and all, never to be seen again.

I had bad luck with the corn, two busy weekends when I couldn't get down and it had turned to dry husks. I noticed that someone looked rather smug and well fed though. When I generously offered Megg some zucchinis she positively smirked at me. It all came out. Apparently, she's been living off me all summer. Didn't plant any vegies herself, no need, with me doing all the dirty work for her. All she had to do was pop past on her way home and pick dinner. I ask you! Penalties will follow.

She keeps telling me it's time to plant the winter crop. Well, I can't even find the beds under all the pumpkin leaves, and if brassicas need to be watered, well, I'm less than enthusiastic. I think this winter, it's definitely her turn . . . 

## — PENPALS —

Hello, our names are Holly (13), Emily (11) and Jasmine (6). We are home-educated and live on a country farm. Our interests are Christianity, animals, horse riding, craft work, pottery and gardening. We would like to correspond with like-minded children.

H, E & J Johnston (GR150)  
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.

G'day, I am a happy, single 45-year-old man who would like penpals. I have a small vegie garden which I enjoy. I have a car and push-bike. Other interests include music and cookery. I have three pets and am down to earth.

**Arthur Galea  
5 King St, BENALLA 3672.**

Hi, my name is Melanie. I'm ten years old. I live on a farm in Mossiface. We have lots of animals like cows, bulls, horses, dogs, sheep and a cat. I love singing, playing my guitar, gardening, camping and horse riding. I would like a penpal between 9 and 11, a girl, if possible.

**Melanie Kramme  
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

Hi, my name is Cindy-lou. I have a cat and three dogs. My favourite footy team is the Bulldogs. I am seven and would like a penpal aged between 7 and 8 years.

**Cindy Kramme (GR150)  
C/- PO Box 117, SEYMOUR 3661.**

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# GRASSIFIEDS

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Use the form provided below, or a separate sheet of paper, to print your advertisement clearly, **not in block capitals**, including correct punctuation. If you have more than one ad please print each one on a separate page. Remember to include an address or phone number in your advertisement. Count the number of words and multiply by 85 cents per word (phone number counted as one word) to work out the total cost of your advertisement. Send **with payment** to Grass Roots, PO Box 117, Seymour 3661, before the deadline and we'll include your advertisement in the next issue of Grass Roots. **Deadline for GR 151 is 30 April, 2002.** Please do not fax ads.

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## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**TUMUT, GOOBARRAGANDRA VALLEY**, nth border of Kosciusko Nat Pk, 400 f/hold ac, 1 km frontage to pristine Goobarragandra River & 500 m of crystal clear mtn stream, 50 ac of readily accessible grazing land, balance steep & naturally timbered, peppermint & mountain gum, stands of mature elm trees. Abundant wildlife: finches, wrens, king parrots, black cockatoos, trout, platypus, Murray crays, wallabies etc. Small habitable fibro hut, power on site, building permit & new fences, 2WD access, 25 mins from Tumut, schools, TAFE, hospital, Coles & Woolies. Enjoy a mtn wilderness without abandoning civilisation. \$175,000. Call Tony or Catherine: 02-9897-3959 AH.

**BRAIDWOOD AREA**, 100 ac, scenic, secluded high country. Sunny, elevated, northerly aspect, panoramic views, building permitted, elec on land. Permanent crystal clear mountain crk with trout, 60 ac conservation-listed native bushland, abundant wildlife, 40 ac cleared pasture. Excellent grazing, horticulture, well drained northerly slopes. Springs, fertile granite & basalt soils, ample rainfall. Just over hr beach. Commute to Canberra, easy hr to city centre. \$100,000. Ph: 02-4847-5007.

Email: [affrica@bigpond.com](mailto:affrica@bigpond.com)

**BYRON SHIRE, GOONENGERRY**, share on legal MO (112 ac, 8 shares). This share has 7 ac, dwelling, power, views, r/forest. \$120,000. Ph: 02-6685-7573.

**DRAKE, UPPER CLARENCE VALLEY**, 17 ac f/hold, granite soil, excel fences, pasture & hardwood forest, 2 dams, pump, sheds & yards. Comfortable 1 b/r house, solar power, gas/wood stoves/HWS, refrig, SC heater, septic toilet. Low rates. Mild climate. Stock & plant incl. \$59,000 ONO. Owner retiring. Ph: 02-6737-6824.

**BELLINGEN, THORA** – 5 b/r Steiner designed timber, stone house with separate self-contained studio, workshop, huge organic orchard on 3 ac with 1/4 share 76 ac. Backing on nat pk & fronting Bellinger River, 15 mins Bellingen, Dorrigo & 1 km school. \$220,000. Ph: Harriet, 02-6655-3100.

**FAR NORTH COAST**, 25 mins Lismore, 10 mins Nimbin, solid timber farmhouse on two ac share. Good access, power, ph, water, orchard etc. Established, child friendly MO, 300 ac, river flats to r/forest. Beautiful swimming holes, amazing place. \$70,000. Ph: 02-6689-1823. [www.basechakra.freewebspace.com](http://www.basechakra.freewebspace.com)

**BOWMAN FISH HATCHERY**'s for sale. Acclaimed as one of the best run hatcheries in the country and, after 20 years, we have decided to retire. Set in one of the most picturesque valleys along the coast. If you want lifestyle, this is the place for you. \$400,000 ONO. Ph: 02-6558-7560.

**NORTHERN NSW**, 40 ha, lovely sandstone valley, cypress pine house, solar hot water, 66,000 lts water supply, power, ph, big shed, crk frontage, good paddocks, 20 ha bush, sealed road, 18 km to school & shop. \$148,000. Ph: 02-6649-4183 GRAFTON. More info at: [www.northnet.com.au/~aaman/#](http://www.northnet.com.au/~aaman/#)

**BARKERSVALE/LILLIAN ROCK**: Cute timber cottage on 5 ac share in peaceful Lillfield MO, 15 mins nth Nimbin. Caravan, shed/garages, privacy, nice views, gardens, ample water, good soil, excel solar system, generator, gas & solar hot water, wood heater, close to schools, buses & sealed road. \$89,000. Ph: Peter, 02-6689-7482, or 02-6628-1414 (work). View at: [www.realestateguide.com.au/lillfield/](http://www.realestateguide.com.au/lillfield/)

**TUROSS RIVER**, 1 hr Narooma, 40 ac, secluded, river frontage, 30 ac cleared, 2 dams, 8 fenced paddocks, house cow. Fergie tractor & slasher, implements, sheds. House, 2 b/r with solar pnl, batteries, wood heating, hot water & cooking, gas fridge 200 lt, 240V gen, 12V charger, pumps etc. \$160,000. Ph: 02-4476-3972, or 02-4476-3187.

**EMMAVILLE**, 4 b/r cottage on 5 ac. Two dams, sheds, coolroom, power, ph, lovely gardens, school bus. \$89,000. Ph: 02-6733-7257. View at: [www.brooksartbydesign.com/house.html](http://www.brooksartbydesign.com/house.html)

**ONE HUNDRED ACRES** Nambucca Valley, 4 b/r homestead in quiet location, good water from bore, crk & spring. Irrigation licence, fertile well-drained soil. Mostly undulating to hill country with some alluvial flats. \$200,000. Ph: 02-6564-8285.

**INVERELL, 40 ACRES**, excel grazing, spring-fed crk & dam, elec/ph avail. New 9 m x 7 m Colorbond shed. \$57,000. Some owner finance avail. Ph: 02-6737-5513.

**TENTERFIELD**, 160 ac, absolute riverfront, hidden in magical valley, swimming/fishing/ canoeing. New 9 m x 7 m Colorbond shed. Electricity next to shed. \$76,000. Ph: 02-6737-5513.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**LARNOOK, NEAR LISMORE**, 2 ac share on strata title community. Timber house & studio, both have solar, town water, gas stove/fridge, polished floors & more. Beautiful r/forest regeneration, f/trees, dams & wildlife. \$119,500. Ph: 02-6633-7131.

**NIMBIN**, 10 yr old WRC house, personal 1½ ac, share 360 ac r/forest on MO with 25 other shareholders. \$73,000. Contact: 02-6689-1608. edkiefer@hotmail.com.au

**QUIRINDI, NEAR TAMWORTH**, house + business, 100 ac native bush overlooking Quipolly Dam. Bird watchers' & artists' paradise. Converted conference centre, 2 kitchens, 2 b/r, 6 x 12 m garaport, 3 x 6 m shed, heating & cooling; 2 b/r fully s/c cottage, kitchen, bathroom, heating, 2 separate titles. Live in one, sell, rent or use other as holiday unit. Peace & tranquillity guaranteed. POA. Ph: 02-6746-1417.

**FAR SOUTH COAST**: half share of 120 ac bush block at Mt Darragl, 2 sml clearings, liveable shed with water & ph on. Beautiful crk that runs all year. Pambula beach 45 mins. \$32,000. Ph: Steve, 02-5476-2238.

**LOVELY SMALL SECLUDED COTTAGE** – r/forest mtn setting, much wildlife. Good water supply, spring & tank. Wood chip heater, solar power, trop f/trees, school bus, + 2 ac share on MO, Channon/Nimbin area, main & 3 rooms. Price \$49,000. Ph: 02-6621-4981, or 03-9499-3463. Brigitte Zweng, 22 Clarice St, LISMORE 2480.

**BIRBBAREE, COTTAGE**, 2 – 3 b/rs, grocery store, joinery, furniture store, shedding, hay shed, hardware, lge vegie garden, 60 f/trees, 30 grape vines. Walk-in walk-out situation. Close to school, bowls club, pub. Suitable for family of carpenter, handyman, gardener. \$85,000. Ph: John, 02-6383-2375.

### QUEENSLAND

**BAUPLE**, midway between Gympie & Maryborough, 63 ac secluded forest country, some cleared areas, adjoins state forest one side, cannot be built out. Modern 2 b/r brick home, 2 lge sheds with power, plenty of water, fenced, school bus. A desirable place to live, selling well below replacement cost @ \$220K. Further details email amolar@hotmail.com or write to Mike, PO Box 4096, TINANA, Qld 4650.

**MARYBOROUGH – NORTH ARAMARA**, 40 km from town, 3 b/r wooden house, 2 s/outs, rumpus, bar, pool table, 3 sheds/garage, BBQ area, all year round natural spring 30 m from house on ½ ac. School bus to door, low rates. \$75,000 ONO, willing to neg. Bargain. Ph owner: 07-4953-3540.

#### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify us of any change of contact details so we can redirect enquires. Call us on 03-5792-4000. 

DEADLINES: GR151 – APRIL 30  
GR152 – JUNE 30

**MT MEE** (overlooking folk festival Woodford) – with mountain views to Sunshine Coast, 154 ac natural r/forest, waterfall, millable timber. Large spring-fed dam, farm shed, tractor, good quality 3 b/r home & garage. Fenced paddocks, very private. \$379,000. Ph: 07-5499-0025.

**GOODNIGHT SCRUB**, 60 ac, shed with covered verandah, attached laundry/shower, 5000 gal tank, 1000 gal gravity tank, dam, seasonal crk. \$59,000. Ph: 0428-441-964.

**RAVENSBOE, NORTH QUEENSLAND**, 1.1 ha fertile land, gently sloping block to perm flowing crk. Runs 12 mths of the year. Six km to the town of Ravenshoe. Approved plans for pole home. Town power connected to block. A bonus of FREE poles goes with purchase – approx \$3000. Asking price \$42,000 ONO. Ph: owner, 07-4032-4118, mobile 0403-788-748.

**MILLMERRAN**, 30 km from town, 22 ac, part cleared. Clearspan shed, plans to convert to home, septic, ph, power avail, sealed roads, school bus, water tanks, c/van, tractor, home lighting plant, chook yard, tool shed, garden sheds, lots more. \$45,000. Ph: 07-4695-4228.

**ILBILBIE**, 12.7 ac, 37 km south of Sarina, 2 b/r council approved dwelling. Highway frontage, 2-bay lockable shed with 2-bay c/port, 350 GPH bore, 5000 gal r/water tank, cattle yards, dam, school bus. Ten mins to excel fishing & crabbing area. \$74,500. Ph: 07-4950-3056, or 0407-116-859.

**MILLMERRAN**, 250 ac f/hold, untouched bushland, \$44,200. Ph: Chris, 08-8975-0832.

**THIRTY ACRES PARTLY CLEARED**, 3 hrs west of Brisbane. Cosy 5 room cabin, 12 x 85 watt solar panel power, professionally installed, s/c/wood stove with wetback. Two lge dams recently cleaned. Same owner for 12 years. Will sell 50% to right person or outright for \$55,000. Possible vendor finance. Ph: 0427-660-290.

**TOOWOOMBA TWENTY MINUTES**. Comfortable 3 b/r home on 3 ac. Bore & tank water, vegie garden, chook run. School bus, rural outlook, peace & quiet. \$125,000. Ph: 07-4691-0250.

**SIX (APPROX) GENTLE ACRES** on low spur overlooking beautiful, rural valley, 350° views. Perm bore + 100,000 lt r/water storage; 350m² 3 b/r rammed earth home (incl 3 m wide verandah all round). Cathedral timber ceilings, solar lighting, 240 mains power points, s/c/stove & 300 lt HWS, granite rock open f/place, all windows are leadlighted casements. Dry composting toilet, fenced vegie garden, fenced 24 fruit estab orchard/chook run/chook shed, 6 x 12 m shed with annexe, half is enclosed, was one-room granny flat, rest is workshop & studio. Circular drive, estab decorative trees & agroforestry plot. Kangaroos, koalas, 50+ native bird species. It's all here. All the hard work done. Divorce sale. Four km to town, 40 km west of Gympie. \$145,000. Ph: 07-5484-1485.

**CAPE TRIBULATION**, North Queensland, 13 ac, perm crk with swimming holes, 1.8 km to stunning beaches. Surrounded by World Heritage listed r/forest, very popular ecotourist destination. Home & 3 new cabins. Timber, lattice & slate buildings designed for tropical living. Solar powered, organic orchards & gardens. Established as an alternative holiday retreat. \$295,000. Ph: 07-4098-9140.

**MAROONDAN** – 25 ac, 8 km Gin Gin, 40 km Bundaberg, beaches etc. Near Kookaburra Park Eco-Village, dam, power, ph. \$39,000. Ph: 07-5451-2243 BH, 07-5494-8370.

Email: shepheme@iprimus.com.au

**TRANQUIL LOCATION**, 40 ac selectively cleared, fenced, 3 b/r house, sheds, yards, seasonal crk, dams, bore. Tractor, machinery plus much more. \$150,000. Ph: Warwick, 07-4667-4940, 0421-042-380.

**GOOD GRAZING COUNTRY**, 322 ac f/hold, 25 mins Dalby. Creek, dam, power, school bus, all-weather access road, huge potential for self-suff minded person. \$95,000. Ph: 07-4668-2159.

**GYMPIE, TEN PRIVATE ACRES**, power, weekender, enclosed BBQ area, r/water tank, perm crk, fully fenced, must see. \$67,000. Ph: 0413-916-654.

**NINDERRY**: 20 mins Coolum/Noosa, 3+ ac, beautiful high position, 2 b/r house on steel poles to lock-up, timber floor. \$115,000 ONO. Ph: 0409-848-274.

**HOUSE ON 327 ACRES** with tractor & machinery, 40 mins from Bundaberg & Hervey Bay. \$180,000. Ph: 07-4126-0280 after 5pm.

**QUIET RURAL RETREAT** with panoramic views & lovely breezes on 40 ac, 5 cleared, rest natural bush with walkways, wildlife & unique plants, 25 mins Rockhampton, 7 mins Stanwell. Modern rockblock home, newly painted, has spacious kitchen, verandahs, f/screened, huge deck area & pool, 2 good bores + 5000 gal r/water tank, 2-bay garage w/large workshop, games room, lge studio/office adjoining. Private sale. Ph: 07-4934-5959. \$115,000.

**CHILDERES AREA**, 15 mins drive to shopping centre, primary school metres away. Fenced ½ ac gardens, 7 yr old lowset, 3 carpeted b/rs, BIR, split air-conditioning, tiled floors, open plan living. lge covered entertainment area off dining room, double c/port, garden sheds. \$57,000. Ph: 07-4127-7212.

**ATHERTON TABLELANDS**, Topaz, 130 ac r/forest bordering World Heritage. Abundant wildlife, running crks, 2 b/r house, f/trees, sheds. Mail run & school bus. \$195,000. Ph: 07-4096-8386. Email: ausgold@tpg.com.au Website: www4.tpgi.com.au/janmearns

**PEACEFUL, RESTORATIVE**, low-maintenance property near Crows Nest, 2½ hrs drive Brisbane. Wood fires in winter. Octagonal home + self-contained cottage + workshop on 8.864 ha. Mains power, ph, 11,000 gal tanks. \$145,000. Ph: 07-4159-6032.

**STUART TOWN**, between Wellington & Orange, 136 ac hilly bush block, power next door, covered steel work area & other buildings, peace & quiet. \$40,000. Ph: 07-5438-7560.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE QUEENSLAND

**WHITSUNDAYS AREA**, selectively cleared 7 ac rural retreat, lge 96° shed house – verandah, c/port, garage, dam, r/water tanks, mains power, 2 yrs old. Close to school, shop, beach, golf, 10 nautical miles to Whitsunday Islands. Good fishing & crabbing. Very liveable bargain – \$60,000. Ph: Mick, 0408-718-341.

**CHINGHEE CREEK** near Lamington Nat Pk, restored workers' cottage on forested 6 ac. Detached loft cottage, 2 handcrafted workshops. RAPS solar. Artist's quiet wildlife haven, 1/2 hr Beaudesert, 1 1/2 hrs Brisbane. Close school. \$180,000. Ph: 07-5544-8216.

**PENTLAND, NORTH QUEENSLAND**, gardener's delight, 11 ac prime river loam, chemical-free organic farm. Creek frontage, windmill, pumps, r/water tanks, bore. Many estab mature f/trees, approx 140 netted grape vines. Three b/r high-set open plan home, 4-bay shed, 8 lockable doors, 3-phase power, \$145,000. Ph: 07-4788-1188.

Email: philcar@austarnet.com.au

**EUDLO RAINFOREST**, environmentally built, architect designed, fully screened 4 b/r house. Workshop, 4 x 4 m internal garden, industrial kitchen, 25 ac private valley, 2 crks, excel soil for permaculture and/or plant nursery. \$290,000. Ph: 07-5478-9958.

**KOOKABURRA PARK**, 3 km from Gin Gin, Qld, ecovillage, 3 b/r home, solar HWS, 3 m verandahs, dam, fruit, natives. Freehold lot + 360 ac common (lakes, bush). \$125,000. Ph: 07-4157-3375. Website avail.

**COUNTRY TOWN OF LEYBURN**, 30-40 mins Warwick, 276 ac 1, 2 or 3 b/r home with lge verandahs, solar hot water, solar powered, s/c & gas stoves & fridge. One octagon studio, wood lined throughout, lge central room, 8 1/2 m, 4 other lge rooms + kitchen, shower, composting toilet, lge verandah, solar powered, s/c & gas stoves, plenty water, 3 dams, 2 bores, octagon vegie organic garden, chook tractor, lge shadehouse, f/trees & other gardens & sheds. \$199,000. Ph: 07-4695-0115. Can no longer keep up with the work.

**MACKAY DISTRICT**, 5 1/2 ac mango producing, supplement your income/reduce your tax. Six bay extra-lge shed, machinery, bore, 3 b/r a/c home (incl sunroom/rumpus), tank water, elec, bitumen rd, school bus front door (preschool – yr 12), 5 km to great crabbing/fishing. Ph: 07-4958-8487.

**MALENY**, 6-yr-old, 2 b/r western red cedar cottage, dormer windows, loft b/r, cathedral ceilings, opening plan living. Verandah looking over valley to Mt Mellum. 15 ac natural bush (2 ac around house cleared), backing onto Stanley River. Swimming holes in r/forest 500 m down road. Huge insulated workshop/studio (6 m x 9 m), windows all round + verandah. Carport/garden shed. Workshop & house fully solar-powered, 240V. Composting toilet, greywater system, 10,000 gal water tank. Absolutely peaceful & private. \$220,000. Ph: 07-5499-9824.

PLACING AN AD?  
See page 75 for details

**CAIRNS, BESSIE POINT**, 30 mins to Cairns, high-set 2 b/r, air-conditioned, polished timber floors, close to beach, lge block, fenced. \$120,000. Contact Jean Friend, 163 Bunda St, CAIRNS, Qld 4870.

**INGHAM, NORTH QUEENSLAND**, 40 ac rich fertile cleared crk bank, well drained, no flood; ideal small crops, hobby farm, cattle. Good investment. Three-bay shed, living quarters, clean perm bore water, billabong to irrigate, close to coastline, swimming holes & parks. Land & shed – \$165,000. Land, shed, tractor, equip – \$185,000. Worth a look, good buying. Ph: David, 07-4777-1239.

**WHITSUNDAYS REGION**, approx 9 ac, of semi-cleared bush, beautiful r/forest, long driveway off sealed road leads to a very private 2 clear ac with almost-completed solid 2 b/r cottage, with breathtaking views of mountains, valleys, ocean & islands off in the distance. Property is fully fenced with new sheep/goat wire, with 2 m high 1/2 ac safety stock paddock near cottage, some sheds etc. Only 3 km off Bruce Highway to shops, servo/grain store, school, local river etc. Just 10 mins to local beach & famous Laguna Quays resort, 20 mins shopping centre, 45 mins to Airlie Beach or Mackay, excel proven 3000 gph bore with petrol pump & 1000 gal tank. Underground power, ph connected. Owner now committed to land down south & truly must sell. Was to be placed on market for \$135,000 completed. Will accept any first reasonable offer, this block must be seen. Ph: owner direct on 07-4749-5834.

**HANDY TOOWOOMBA**, 13 ac, lge 4 b/r house, 2 b/r cottage, 5-car accom, sheds, outbuildings, f/trees galore, lge garden, perm crk with fish, ph, power, school bus at door. \$175,000. Ph: 07-4695-0102.

**MALENY**, 2.5 ac flat nth-facing pasture with very liveable timber shed & nice views in quiet crime-free street, 11 km from town. House pad near perm dam, f/trees, horse yards, storage sheds, subtropical gardens, school buses. \$123,000. Ph: 07-5494-4081.

Email: clarissa.townsend@bigpond.com.au

**TRANQUIL NANANGO**: Self-suff private retreat on 7 1/2 ac has river-rocked walls of cascading landscaped gardens around cabin with views. Wood heater, bath/shower, kitchen with elec stove, plenty water, tanks, pump, sheds, chook run, power, ph. Ten km to waterfall/swimming, 20 mins Bunya Mountains, r/forest bushwalks, school bus & more. \$55,000. Ph: Michelle, 07-4171-0541.

Email: Makiahtwofeathers@yahoo.com

### NO ENDORSEMENT

Grassifieds are accepted in good faith, however, Grass Roots Publishing P/L does not necessarily endorse products and services advertised herein. ☺

**MILLMERRAN**, 25 ac untouched bushland, corner block, 20 mins from town. \$15,000. Ph: 07-4695-41104.

**KOOKABURRA PARK RURAL RETREAT**, Bundaberg Gin Gin Rd, Qld. Houses for sale: 2 b/r + double lockup garage, excel condition – \$80,000; 3-b/r hi-set home, great buying – \$75,000; 4 b/r executive brick home with 4 car brick-lined garage or granny flat, verandah 3 sides – \$180,000. All on approx 1 ac f/hold land. Serviced with underground power, phones, yard water. Private sealed roads. This private estate has 360 ac of parkland with lakes & wildlife abundant. Rates are approx \$600 per year. Schools, town etc within 4 km, golf club next door. The park is a good alternative to a retirement village or a great place to bring up children as they can run free & safe through the park. Ph: Barry, 07-4157-2850 / nbre.com.au

**LOWMEAD** – 1770 – 308 ac, 2 dams, crk. Grass Roots lifestyle & more, 3 km from school & hotel-post office. Bush, palms & forest. \$115,000. Vendor terms available. Ph: 07-4121-5028.

## VICTORIA

**ACCESS TO WILDLIFE**, short drive to local fishing areas, 5 ac fully fenced. \$20,000 ONO. Opposite 479 Scouller's Rd, STONEYFORD. Ph: 0419-105-744.

**BUSH RETREAT/WEEKENDER** or perm getaway, 38 km SW of Colac. North facing fully furnished 3 b/r house on 2 1/2 ac. Bottle gas lights, hot water, fridge (not working) & stove. Phone connected. Perm crk, huge gums, partly cleared, lge cement water tank, bordered by state forest. Only a few ac to look after, hundreds to enjoy. Just 2 1/2 hrs from Melbourne, 1 1/2 hrs from Geelong, in the foothills of the Otways. \$85,000. Ph: 03-5281-7332, or 0427-542-852.

**CASTERTON**, 4-room settlers' cottage, 1.75 ac, good shedding, fencing, tiny sleepout, f/trees, 250 blackwoods, 45 mins Hamilton/Mt Gambier. \$39,000. Ph: 03-5581-2023.

**EUROA DISTRICT**, Longwood East, 'Wedgetail', 40 ac (16 ha) with comfortable bluestone house. Land suitable grazing, bush regeneration area approx 5 ac & fenced reafforestation plots, chemical free. Much wildlife incl kangaroos, koalas & dozens of bird species. House nestled into hillside with spectacular views Strathbogie Ranges, 3 b/rs, 2 bathrooms, 2 lge living areas, air conditioner, enclosed wood-burning fire, verandahs 2 sides, many unique features. Double c/port, good all-purpose shed, dog runs, poultry sheds, woodshed, walk-in cellar (needs renovation). Large organic garden incl variety f/trees & no-dig vegie beds, many native trees/shrubs – bursting with biodiversity. Good water incl 3 dams, 90,000 lt (approx) r/water tank, gravity-fed drip & microspray irrigation & diesel pump. Be as self-suff as you want, or just enjoy a tranquil lifestyle in stunning surroundings. Hard work done, but still room for you to make your mark. \$265,000. Ph: agent, John Stringer, 03-5795-2868, 0418-575-156.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## PROPERTY FOR SALE VICTORIA

**TALLANGATTA VALLEY**, 'Waterfall Creek': All the hard work is done! 32 sq 6 b/r, solar-passive, rammed-earth home on 60 ha organic property. \$675,000. Ph: 02-6071-0210. Full description: [www.australiarealty.com](http://www.australiarealty.com) Email: [waterfallcreek@bigpond.com](mailto:waterfallcreek@bigpond.com)

**OTWAYS, LORNE** 25 km, unbelievable views, 53 ac cattle farm. \$279,000. Ph: 0408-608-808.

**A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY** – shares and home avail at Mt Murrindal Co-op. Walk into an established lifestyle one only dreams of! Beautiful property in the foothills of the Snowy Mountains with state forest boundary, 1 hr from Lakes Entrance/Bairnsdale. We are a working community who function as a co-operative, sharing working bees to maintain this 140 ac property. There are 6 individual homes with their private gardens & space. Due to the imminent retirement of 2 of our founding members we have avail a 12 yr old 2 b/r home with lg open plan living, dining kitchen area, sep study, with stunning views of the Dawson Range. Community assets incl a lg well-kept vegie garden, hothouses, tools, mulcher, ride-on mower, workshop, chook run & shed, fruit orchard, lg c/van for WWOOFER accom & several dams. We are a diverse group, working as bush nurse, park ranger, ceramic artist, English/Japanese teacher, WWOOF office, bed & breakfast incorporating yoga/meditation proprietor & naturopath. We are inviting practical energetic people to join our wonderful lifestyle. Ph: Heather, 03-5155-0340 to arrange a visit, or email: [bethallen@net-tech.com.au](mailto:bethallen@net-tech.com.au)

**YANDOIT, DAYLESFORD** 25 km NW: Jajawong Country Cottages & Camping offers a couple, family or sml consortium of people the chance to purchase a lifestyle and/or estab business in tourism: 73 ac undulating, bush & Land for Wildlife property with mudbrick & cedar main house & 5 individually built FSC, 2 b/r cottages, + sml private, landscaped camp ground with modern uni-sex facilities. Large dams, LPG, solar & diesel power supply. Comes with cleaning van, 4WD, tractor, pumps, hot tub/sauna & much more. Asking \$640,000. Ph: 03-5476-4362. For more info & pics go to: [www axs.com.au/~jajarc](http://www axs.com.au/~jajarc)

## TASMANIA

**NEW NORFOLK** 20 mins, 15 ac, mostly bush, 3 b/r home, 2 lg living areas, perm water, f/trees, generator/solar power, fenced areas, s/c/stove, wood heater, next door 1 km away! \$92,500. Ph: owner, 03-6231-1617.

**BRIDGENORTH**, 20 mins NW of Launceston, 50 ac, 4 b/r house. \$150,000. Ph: 03-6330-2842. Full info: <http://home.austamet.com.au/4sale>

**'TIERVIEW'** at Goshen, 15 km to beaches, peaceful rural setting. Weatherboard cottage, 3 b/r, combustion stove. Approved for tearoom. \$83,000. Ph: 03-6373-6224. Further info: [www.australiarealty.com](http://www.australiarealty.com) reference F130059

**DEADLINES: GR151 – APRIL 30  
GR152 – JUNE 30**

### TWO HOUSES FOR THE PRICE OF ONE:

Collinsvale, 30 mins north of Hobart's GPO. Set on 131 ac in a peaceful wooded valley in the mountains. Built for a community, this very lg home comprises a split-level passive solar design main house with 5 lg b/rs, darkroom & workshop, linked by an enclosed walkway to a renovated self-contained cottage c1900 with 3 b/rs. Phone, gas, wood stove, & combustion heaters, several outbuildings, chook run, perm spring water to both houses, dam, 2 crks, forest walking tracks. Amazing value – \$210,000. Enquires to: Peter Baker, Wellington Real Estate. Ph: 03-6260-2172, or 0418-533-495. [www.realestate.com.au/agent/wellington](http://www.realestate.com.au/agent/wellington)

**PEACEFUL, WONDERFUL VIEWS**, north Bruny Island, Tas. Freshly renovated 3 b/r house on 3 ac, outbuildings. Overlooking Safe Bay, boat mooring avail. Taking offers around \$90,000. Ph: 03-6260-6375, or 0419-358-857.

**DO YOU WANT TO LIVE** in the country, yet be only 1/2 hr from Launceston? Then consider this, 2 b/r w/b cottage, neat & tidy throughout. New roof, HWS, heat pump. Town water r/water tank, 1/4 ac block, f/trees, soft fruits, good soil. Close to local markets – great potential to be almost self-suff. Asking \$55,000. Reply to: PO Box 7631, Wellington St, LAUNCESTON 7250.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**PRIVATE SALE**, 2 storey house, 3 b/r, 2 bathrooms, lg dining/lounge, partly furnished, ceiling fans, 2 aircons, open living area downstairs. Garden shed, 7500 gal, r/water tank, newly painted outside, well maintained garden. No rates to pay, peace & serenity. Hop skip and jump to beautiful Karajini gorges. Genuine buyers only. Photos on request. \$55,000 ONO. Ph: 08-9189-7018.

**NULLAGINE, NORTH-WEST AUSTRALIA**, good gold country, fully-furnished 2 b/r house & 4 roomed transportable building suitable for extra accom/storage/workshops on lg estab town block. \$58,000. Ph: 08-9176-2058, or [p.f.walsh@mail.com](mailto:p.f.walsh@mail.com)

## COMMUNITIES/SHARES

**ONE-THIRD SHARE** in 17 ac, hill country, sml hilltop building site. Views over Kin Kin Basin. Spring-fed dam in valley below. Some organic f/trees. Twenty mins Pomona, 45 mins Noosa. \$35,000. Ph: 07-5496-3316.

**BORDER RANGES** World Heritage area northern NSW, 5 ac on 330 ac regenerating forest community, great views, house site, shed, tank, sml dam, ph connection, primary school at entrance, Steiner school nearby, close to Nimbin, Lismore & Kyogle. No cats or dogs. \$19,990. Ph: 02-6689-7584 before 8pm.

**ANYONE FOR A NONELECTRIC**, rural lifestyle? I have the land, if you have the willingness to share work, please write (no phone) to: Kevin Smith, Bingo-Tice Rd, BENAMBRA, Vic 3900.

## PROPERTY WANTED

**LOOKING FOR FIVE – TEN ACRES**, secluded 2 hrs drive north/northwest of Sydney. Ph: 02-9451-3519.

**FINANCE NEEDED**, family seeks move to Tasmania (Burnie area). We require: land (ideally 50+ ac), perm water, old farmhouse (liveable). Currently working in Victoria, could get small deposit together. We have 2 young boys & want a break for a better life. Please ph Barbara: 0416-296-646 with all offers. Thank you.

## FOR RENT/CARETAKER WANTED

**FLATMATE**, 30 ac 3 hrs west of Brisbane, cosy cabin on solar pwr. Forty yr old nudist/bi guy looking for tidy countrified, nonlazy, person for company. Cheap rent. Please ph: 0427-660-290.

**THREE-BEDROOM COTTAGE**, wood stove – heating water/cooking. Quiet surroundings overlooking dam, near Warwick, Qld. Suit pensioner, retiree. No children. Pets OK. \$130/week. Ph: 07-4661-4803.

**RENT/BUY** use your rent to buy 50% home (joint investment), live in or out. For details ph: 02-6655-3598 after 7.30pm.

**CLUNES VICTORIA**, 2 – 3 b/r house, 30 mins from Ballarat, Daylesford, 40 ac backing state forest, beautiful bush environment, solar power, art studio, sheds. References essential. Ph: 03-9740-0020.

## BUSINESS FOR SALE

**HOLISTIC ANIMAL HEALTH CLINIC** & kennels, Capricorn Coast – well estab with regular clients. Surrounded by 25 wildlife ac – English-style chalet with spectacular views, sheds & paddock & plenty of crystal-clean water. Ph: 07-4939-7380.

**'THE SOLAR SHOP'** (Grafton NSW), exclusive: Solarhart dealership over 1100 customers, solar power products & services, Solatube natural lighting skylights, wood cookers/heaters. Business only or inclusive f/hold property. Ph: Murray on 02-6642-3311, or 0411-537-252.

## WANTED TO RENT/CARE-TAKE

**TWO MATURE WOMEN**, cats, dog, wanting house, 50+ ac accessible Grafton. Reply: Vanessa, PO Box 373, COONABARABRAN 2357.

Cost of Grassified ads does not include any extra formatting: extra bold text, indents, spaces, stars or other symbols. If you require an ad with formatting please enquire about our display advertising rates. Call Sue on 03-5792-4000. ¶

# CLASSIFIEDS

## OPPORTUNITIES

**WRITERS, BOOST YOUR INCOME** as a freelance writer in 6 months or less. For more info print your name & address on the back of an envelope & send to: Wellfedwriter, PO Box 655, CALOUNDRA 4551.

**CARER/PERSONAL ASSISTANT** required by active, healthy 61 yr old male cancer survivor, living remote Cape York. Beautiful lake & river adjoin the property. I require ongoing motivation & assistance with my rigorous daily exercise routine (personal fitness trainer sort of thing) & a remedial/sports massage twice a week. Assistance with organic garden also. Prefer spiritually focused person into healing modalities such as reiki & the like. I do not smoke or drink, but am tolerant towards those who do. I offer free food and accom in clean self-contained c/van sharing bathroom facilities. Small wage negotiated subject to needs. Previous experience not necessary. Persons of any age, sex, race, creed or colour are invited to apply, or enquire by writing to: Roger G Matson, Locked Mail Bag 1030, COOKTOWN 4871. Email: rogermatson@telstra.com

**WANTED: ENERGETIC**, truly committed person or couple to participate in management of estab p/c system with subtropical orchards & NASAA certified commercial veg garden (0.2 ha). A real opportunity to gain practical experience over an intensive 3 month period (neg). Separate house in beautiful setting. Write to: David Loneragan, C/- PO KANGAROO VALLEY, NSW 2577. Ph: 02-4465-1364.

## PUBLICATIONS

**'GRUB PUDDING'**, autographed copies from Pam Cole. \$25 incl postage. Ph: 02-4988-6871. 25 Wallaroo Rd, SEAHAM, NSW 2324.

Email: pamcole@bravo.net.au

**SUPPRESSED & UNUSUAL TECHNOLOGIES CATALOGUE**. Free energy devices, anti-gravity, hydrogen fuel, magnetic motors, alternate fuels & engines, high mileage, 200+ topics. Send 6 x 45c stamps to: Lostech Archive, PO Box 456-R, TOLGA, Qld 4882.

**BOOK 'ABSOLUTELY DELICIOUS LICORICE'**, how to grow and use', by Isabell Shipard, & licorice sample - \$10. Three licorice roots to grow - \$20, 2 vanilla plants - \$20, 4 curry trees - \$20, 6 betel leaf - \$20. Shipards, Box 66, NAMBOUR 4560. Ph: 07-5441-1101.

**'GRASS ROOTS'** issue 21, 27, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 39, 47, 55, 80, 81, 87, 90, 100. Good condition, \$5 each plus postage. Ph: 0417-505-488.

## ATTENTION CLASSIFIED ADVERTISERS

- Get ads in early so we have time to contact you to clarify any questions which may arise.
- Neat printing is essential so we can print your ad correctly. ☺

PLACING AN AD?  
See page 75 for details

**BOOKS, OLD AND NEW**, send for general list. R Suters, PO Box 127, FIGTREE 2525.

**'NATIVE STINGLESS BEES'** for profit or pleasure - how to get started, pollination/honey potential in Queensland. Detailed info booklets, packed with photographs, diagrams. For free catalogue, send name, address & 45c stamp to: ANBRC, Box 74-G4, NORTH RICHMOND 2754.

**'NEW VEGETARIAN & NATURAL HEALTH'**, the magazine of the Natural Health & Vegetarian Societies. Subscribe today, \$30 yearly and receive: 4 vital magazines, discounts at participating health food stores and natural therapies practitioners listed in magazine. Head Office, 28/541 High St, PENRITH, NSW 2750. Ph: 02-4721-5068.

**'NIMBIN NEWS MAGAZINE'**, is a co-operatively run access magazine with articles & information from Nimbin and other areas. We cover concerns relevant to alternative lifestyles & others looking for the most sustainable way. We are one of the longest running alternative magazines & the Nimbin bioregion is at the forefront in the development of sustainable systems. As networkers we scan many mags for suitable & scarce information for our readers. Subscription: 6 issues for \$20, sample \$3.50. Back copies 5 for \$12 posted. PO Box 209, NIMBIN 2480.

**HOME EDUCATION**, for info send SAE to: Alternative Education Resource Group, PO Box 461, DAYLESFORD 3460.

**STEINER HOME SCHOOLDING?** A teaching manual by Alan Whitehead on Creativity and Curriculum. Send \$12 to: Golden Beetle Books, Box 329, BLACKHEATH 2785. Ph: 02-4787-5335, fax: 02-4787-5339. Visa-Mastercard.

[www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/](http://www.users.bigpond.com/goldenbeetlebooks/)  
**BOOKS, NEW AND OLD**. Australian, lifestyle, Pacific, biography, horticulture, gardening, outdoors. Lists avail. BA & JM Wallace, Box 325, PORTLAND 3305.

## FOOD & KITCHEN

**LOSE OR GAIN WEIGHT SAFELY**. Yes you are what you eat. Micronutrient supplementation designed with herbal & botanical ingredients. Ph: 1300-765-111, or 0419-817-521.

**QUALITY GRAINMILL AND JUICER PRODUCTS**, manual & electric, ph: 02-4751-2477. Web: [www.jucers.com](http://www.jucers.com)

**HOME STONE FLOUR MILLS** - mill your own stoneground wholemeal flour for cakes and bread at home with a Retsel Little Ark stone flour mill. Endorsed by Housewives Association. Write for catalogue to: Retsel Distributors, PO Box 712, DANDEMONG 3175, encl 3 postage stamps. Ph: 03-9795-2725. Distributor enquiries welcome.

Website: [www.retsel.com.au](http://www.retsel.com.au)

**STONE GROUND FLOUR**, in-home, with a SCHNITZER German quality hand or electric stone mill, 10 models, from \$178. Send SAE for info, add \$5 for video. SCHNITZER MILLS, PO Box 1867, BOWRAL 2576. Ph: 02-4861-1581, fax: 02-4861-1249. Visit our website at [www.schnitzer.com.au](http://www.schnitzer.com.au)

## MISCELLANEOUS

**HOW TO MAKE MONEY** selling & making chess pieces, bird baths, fine art, gnomes etc. Plaster and/or cement moulds. For methods & catalogue send \$14.95 to: Williams Imports, PO Box 989, SOUTHPORT 4215 (06/50 Railway St). Ph/fax: 07-5532-9050. Website: [www.supermoulds.com.au](http://www.supermoulds.com.au)

**TEEPEES, VIKING TENTS**, medieval tents, swags, buckskin clothing. Seventeen years experience. BOJO PRODUCTS, PO Box 112, AVENEL 3664. Ph: 0412-368-034, 03-5796-2753 AH. Email: [bojo\\_products@hotmail.com](mailto:bojo_products@hotmail.com) Website: [www.frojel.com/members/bojo](http://www.frojel.com/members/bojo)

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

**LOSE OR GAIN WEIGHT SAFELY**, free brochure, ph: 1300-765-111, or 0419-817-521.

**MOON PADS™** cloth menstrual pads & **THE KEEPER** ® menstrual cup: Earth-friendly, sustainable, reusable products, good for your purse, your health & our environment. Visit [www.moonpads.alltasmanian.com](http://www.moonpads.alltasmanian.com) or send SAE to: Moon Pads, PO Box 118, SANDY BAY, Tas 7006.

**HEALTH CARE VIA THE POST**. Homoeopath/naturopath, Heather Pemberton, conducts consultations via the post to treat all ailments. \$45. For more info write to: PO Box 363, BLACKBURN, 3130, or see website at [www.theopenlotus.com.au](http://www.theopenlotus.com.au)

**ORGANICALLY GROWN TRADITIONAL** herbal remedies for everyday conditions, arthritis, psoriasis etc. For catalogue please send stamped self-addressed envelope to: Tintagel Herbs, PO Box 27, CENTRAL TILBA, NSW 2546.

**SEEKING ASSISTANCE**: 'Retired' multiskilled handyman/workaholic, hobby farmer, camper-van tourist, becoming very green/health conscious. Has resolved correct diet, regular short detox etc. Seeking periodic R & R, private location close Brisbane with people sympathetic with such ideas. Ph: 07-3202-6338.

**TRADITIONAL EUROPEAN MEDICANT RECIPES**: Free list of 140+ preparations, each for a different condition, incl a range of herbal, vegetable & honey based remedies. Contact: Michael & Lilia, ph: 03-5122-2002.

Email: [mlcolbert@NETC.net.au](mailto:mlcolbert@NETC.net.au)

**LIVING NATURE AUSTRALIA**: Alive!!!! Bio-active skin care from pure plant extracts/cold-pressed nut oils & NZ clays with natural preservatives, honey-based, light texture. Try: All natural shampoo & conditioner; manuka honey hand-cream, day/night creams; wild pansy sun filter etc. Leaflet/mail order/prices: Ph/fax: 07-3236-9223. Email: [livingsnatureaus@powerup.com.au](mailto:livingsnatureaus@powerup.com.au)

# GRASSIFIEDS

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

**RAINBOW DOONA COVERS**, capes & robes. Call Devika: 02-6025-8081, or write: PO Box 326, LAVINGTON, NSW 2641 for a free brochure.

## FOR SALE

**REMOTE POWER SYSTEM**, excel condition, incl generator diesel, 15 KVA - \$4500. Rectifier, 100 amp 4 drawer 48 volts & 48 Telstra exchange stationary batteries (1986 & 1988), incl a stand for 24 batteries - \$14,000 together. Inverter, 48 volt sinewave, 18 mths old - \$2500. Ph: Alan on 02-6236-8309, 0407-488-927.

**'GRASS ROOTS' HISTORY!** Magazines 1 - 34 (1973 - 1982). Offers. Ph: 02-9456-1910.

**COMPOSTING WORMS** in castings, \$10 per/kg + p&h. Ph: 02-6231-2362. Email: brighter@tpg.com.au cc welcome.

**MUDBRICK MACHINE**: High production machine in very good condition, 32 HP diesel-hydraulic powered. Suit MO or mudbrick production business. \$15,000. Ph: 02-6684-1033, 0428-841-033.

**SOLAR EQUIPMENT**: Trace DR1512E automatic inverter/charger 12V, 1500W; Plasmatronics PL40 regulator & shunt; 6 only BP PV stor 2P1110 Amphot deep cycle batteries; control box with fuses etc; Rustic River energy monitor unit for house. All only 18 months old. EC Honda diesel elec remote start 5 kVA diesel only 2 months old. See working. Cost over \$10,000, sell \$8500. Ph: 03-5794-1837

**MICE TRAPS**, Row-ee multi-catch \$20, \$5 postage covers one or more. Harry Rowe, 79 Reddall St, LAKE ILLAWARRA 2528. Ph: 02-4296-1129.

## COURSES

**ORGANIC GARDENING COURSES**, one day and weekend, guided tours, 2.5 ac designed edible gardens - informative. Simply Natural Organic Farm, Eudlo, Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Ph: Jade Woodhouse, 07-5445-9034.

Web: [www.simplynaturalorganic.com](http://www.simplynaturalorganic.com)

Email: [sim.nat.organic@optusnet.com.au](mailto:sim.nat.organic@optusnet.com.au)

**SHOE MAKING**, weekend workshops. Info ph: 03-5687-1297, or email: [storcom@tpgi.com.au](mailto:storcom@tpgi.com.au)

**BIODYNAMIC AGRICULTURE** - introductory field day, Gosford, NSW, 25 May 2002. Learn the essential skills & techniques of biodynamics as developed by Alex Podolinsky & the farmers of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association of Australia. Suited to gardeners, smallholders & farmers. Enquiries: 03-5664-9219 AH.

**ENLIGHTENED RELATIONSHIPS** is a 4-day residential course at a peaceful forest retreat near Byron Bay. Course dates are April 25 - 28, May 16 - 19, June 7 - 10, July 11 - 14. Topics include healing, emotional control, developing self-love, natural r/ship skills & enlightened concepts. Cost is \$395. For more info ph: Stephen or Christine, 02-6685-1954.

Email: [enlightenedrelationships@hotmail.com](mailto:enlightenedrelationships@hotmail.com)

**DEADLINES: GR151 - APRIL 30  
GR152 - JUNE 30**

**INTRO TO PERMACULTURE**, Recycling Greywater, Alternative Energy, Buying a Small Property, Strawbale Construction. Workshops commencing in April. For further details contact: Swan Garden Centre, Lot 40 Farrall Road (North), MIDVALE 6056. Ph: 08-9250-4575. Email: [swangc@iinet.net.au](mailto:swangc@iinet.net.au)

**STUDY PSYCHOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY** to practitioner level from home. Prospectus: Astral Connections, PO Box 62, ST GEORGES BASIN, 2540 NSW.

Website: [www.shoal.net.au/~astralc](http://www.shoal.net.au/~astralc)

**CORRESPONDENCE COURSES**: Aroma-therapy Dip, Vitamin-Nutrition Dip, herbs, animal therapies (the Green Vet), folk medicine, psychic healing, Celtic, wicca, psychic self-development. Free brochure, ph: 02-9319-6166, or write: PO Box 138, SURRY HILLS, NSW 2010.

Email: [chrysalis@powerup.com.au](mailto:chrysalis@powerup.com.au)

**PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSES** with Rick & Naomi Coleman, Southern Cross Permaculture Institute. Next course November 15 - 30, 2002. Call Naomi: 03-5664-3301 for info or, email: [scpi@tpg.com.au](mailto:scpi@tpg.com.au)

## GARDEN & ORCHARD

**ASPARAGUS**, Mary Washington seeds \$5 for 25. Scarlet runner beans \$5 for 10 seeds. Ph: 07-4683-7012.

**COMPANION PLANTING CHART**: over 90 vegetables, herbs and fruits, including plants as insect repellents. Sow When Chart: Suggested sowing times for 100 vegetables, herbs and flowers. Mail order \$7 each + \$3 p&p. Plum Products (G), PO Box 120, Wards Rd, TAMBO UPPER, 3885.

**BAMBOO PLANTS**, lge range, best prices. Ph: 07-4129-4470, fax: 07-4129-0130.

**RAINFOREST SEED COLLECTORS**, national link-up. Buy and sell local seed. Our newsletter has lots to offer. Local seed grows better and doesn't pollute your gene pool. Quarterly newsletter subs \$20, concession \$10. Offer local seed - free subs. RSC, Private Mail Bag, BELLINGEN 2454. Ph: 02-6655-2233.

## LIVESTOCK

**DORPER AND WHITE DORPER** rams for sale. Stud (classified by Dolf Lategan) from \$2200. Flock from \$550, ewes from \$550. Top South African bloodlines. Ken Butcher, ph: 02-6993-0669.

## SERVICES OFFERED

**ASK THREE QUESTIONS** & receive channelled guidance for \$30. Send to: S Gisladottir, PO Box 63, KENDENUP, WA 6323.

**FREE POSTAL CONTACTS** for lone singles 18 - 80. Send SSAE for form to 172 Lucas Drive, LAM ISLAND, Qld 4184.

**HOME PLANS**. *The Earth Builders Plan Catalogue* (180 pages), includes: 92 plans for handcrafted buildings (83 homes & 9 workshops, cabins & carport) of mudbrick, rammed earth, stone, poleframe, timber, poured earth, strawbale, construction details; a working drawing of a small loft floor home (12 x A3 sheets) is included. Mail \$95 (post & pack incl) to: John Barton - Building Design, 31 Sharp Street, NEWTOWN, Vic 3220. Email: [jbarton@pipeline.com.au](mailto:jbarton@pipeline.com.au) Enquiries to 03-5222-5774 for fixed quote to draw and document your home plan. Cheques, Mastercard, Bankcard, Visa accepted. Free 23 page brochure is available.

**RONITA, INDIAN CLAIRVOYANT**: Genuine service at reasonable rates - \$35 for 15 mins - credit card only, from 11am to 8pm. Ph: 03-5176-2521. Also visit: [www.ronitapsychic.com](http://www.ronitapsychic.com) for one free email question.

## WANTED

**SOLAR POWER SYSTEM WANTED**, capable of powering a 3 b/r house. Batteries, inverter, regulator + solar panels, 75 W or 80 W. Would like whole unit, will consider buying separate pieces. Ph: David, 0407-202-282, NSW.

**DEAR GR READERS**, for my next book I am collecting simple herbal remedies using herbs that are easy to grow or readily available. I would love to hear from you if you have a remedy you want to share. A free copy of the book will be sent to anyone whose recipe is published. Please include a return address. Send to: Penny Woodward, RMB 6715, BALNARING, 3926. Email: [woodycoa@surf.net.au](mailto:woodycoa@surf.net.au)

## HOLIDAYS

**RUSSELL ISLAND MAGIC**: Family holiday house, hilly bay view cycling, bushwalks, sandy beach, fishing, sailing, outrigger canoes, B&B 'canoe-maran'. See: [canoeworld.com](http://canoeworld.com) or ph: 07-3409-1960.

**NIMBIN AREA**, cabin, caravans, subtropical garden, inside large community. Ph: 02-6633-7037. Web: [www.spot.com.au/~sundara](http://www.spot.com.au/~sundara)

**MORUYA - FAR SOUTH COAST NSW**, bush cabins, romantic 1 b/r and family 2 b/rs. Big open fires. Horses, dogs welcome by arrangement. \$350 per week, \$140 per weekend. Ph: 02-4474-2542.

**LAMINGTON GLEN**, r/forest retreat, secluded cabin - everything supplied except food., Ph: 07-5544-8166.

**FINCH HATTON GORGE**, Eungella Nat Pk Qld. Platypus bush camp, camping & tree huts, great walking area, the alternative holiday. Ph: 07-4958-3204. Website: [www.bushcamp.net](http://www.bushcamp.net)

## HANDCRAFTS

**STRANDED COTTON BUNDLES**, 100 x 8 m skeins, 50 colours - \$22 post free. Big bundles stranded cotton, 230 colours - \$50 post free. Weaving reeds, 8 - 15 dents. Send 45 c stamp for list. ARTY & CRAFTY, PO Box 40, DAW PARK, SA 5041. Ph: 08-8277-3763, fax: 08-8277-9402.

# GRASSIFIEDS

## HANDCRAFTS

**BEADS BEADS BEADS** – unique selections of handmade glass, metal & wooden beads. Also findings, threads & kits avail. Catalogue is \$10 with samples. Please send payment to: Tsunami, PO Box 129, WALPOLE 6398.

## CLUBS

**NATIONAL ALLERGY ASSOCIATION** of Australia (NAAA) and ECO-CHOICE (our mail-order store). Enquiries; information; clinics; membership & catalogue. Contact NAAA, PO Box 48, HARRIS PARK, NSW 2150. Ph: 0415-928-028. Email: [naaaauz@yahoo.com](mailto:naaaauz@yahoo.com).

**AFFILIATED DONKEY SOCIETIES OF AUSTRALIA.** For info on membership, magazines and help avail write to Ms Ann Fletcher, 74 Bells Lane, KURMOND, NSW 2757. You will be contacted by the representative in your state.

PLACING AN AD?  
See page 75 for details

## PLEASE NOTE

We no longer print Contact ads in *Grass Roots*. Interest in this column has been falling as readers looking for partners become aware of the many new ways of doing so via the Internet, local press etc. We would like to thank the many readers who have supported this column in the past and wish them the best of luck for the future. ¶

## LATE GRASSIFIEDS

**DUNOON** (Lismore 21 km), 5 ac, red soil, gentle slope, organic veg, nuts & 28 varieties of fruit, native trees, grass. Three b/r house, lge verandah, c/port, solar HWS, woodheater, sheds. \$199,000. Ph: 02-6689-5035.

**FIVE ADULTS SEEK** 10 – 40 ac. We're into yoga, permaculture & low impact living. Permanent water, privacy & dwelling essential. Long-term lease, vendor finance. Prepared to spend on infrastructure. Shoalhaven, Eurobodalla, Bega Valley. Ph: 02-6492-8505.

**WANTED: OWNER-BUILDER HOUSE EXCHANGE** for 2 years. Needing place in Mullumbimby. Offer: Adelaide Hills, 45 mins from city, 3 b/r & 2 lounge rooms, owner-builder timber house on 1 ac native garden. Ph: 08-8388-9443, fax: 08-8388-9453.

**STANTHORPE, QLD, AREA,** 15.3 ha bush block with solar home, crk, near nat park. Price: \$105,000. Ph: 07-4683-4254.

## WAITING FOR AN ORDER?

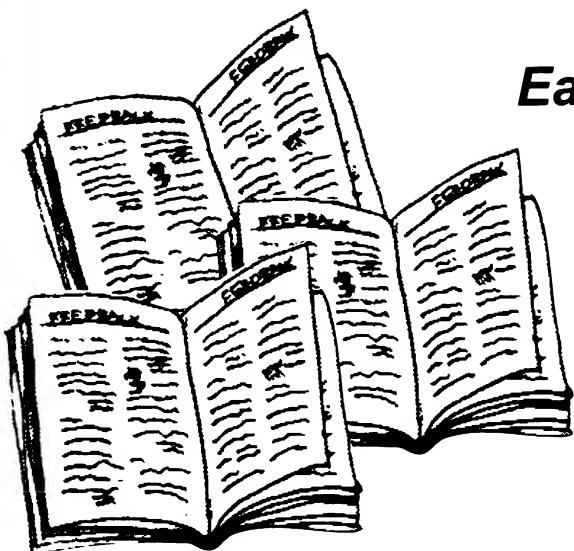
We are currently holding two subscriptions and one book order from people who have sent payment, but no contact details.

To speed up delivery and help the smooth running of GR, **please ensure all correspondence has your contact details included.**

Phone: 03-5792-4000 if you are one of the anonymous three.

# Can't find your back copies?

***What you need is a binder to keep them in order!***



***Each binder is rich burgundy complemented by a white Grass Roots logo.***  
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***See page 82 for order form.***

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*Tick the appropriate boxes then work out the postage and handling costs from the chart below.*

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We invite you to join us and become a part of a gentle people committed to the cause of dwelling in common unity (community) with like-minded brethren.



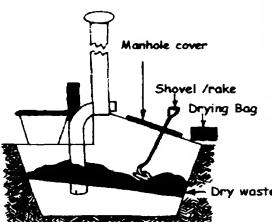
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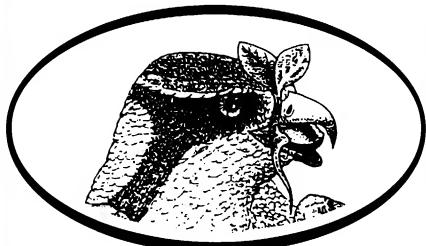
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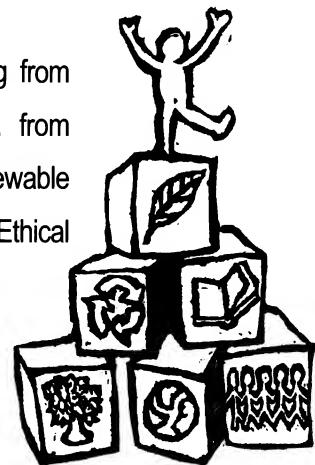
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